A Handbook of Economic Anthropology

Edited by **James G. Carrier**



VISIT…



A HANDBOOK OF ECONOMIC ANTHROPOLOGY

A Handbook of Economic Anthropology

Edited by

James G. Carrier

Senior Research Associate in Anthropology, Oxford Brookes University, UK and Adjunct Professor of Anthropology, Indiana University, USA

Edward Elgar
Cheltenham, UK • Northampton, MA, USA

© James G. Carrier 2005

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical or photocopying, recording, or otherwise without the prior permission of the publisher.

Published by
Edward Elgar Publishing Limited
Glensanda House
Montpellier Parade
Cheltenham
Glos GL50 1UA
UK

Edward Elgar Publishing, Inc.
136 West Street
Suite 202
Northampton
Massachusetts 01060
USA

A catalogue record for this book
is available from the British Library

ISBN 1 84376 175 0 (cased)

Printed and bound in Great Britain by MPG Books Ltd, Bodmin, Cornwall

Contents

List of contributors viii
Preface and acknowledgements xv

Introduction 1
James G. Carrier

PART I ORIENTATIONS

Introduction 13
1 Karl Polanyi 14
Barry L. Isaac
2 Anthropology, political economy and world-system theory 26
J.S. Eades
3 Political economy 41
Don Robotham
4 Decisions and choices: the rationality of economic actors 59
Sutti Ortiz
5 Provisioning 78
Susana Narotzky
6 Community and economy: economy's base 94
Stephen Gudeman

PART II ELEMENTS

Introduction 109
7 Property 110
Chris Hann
8 Labour 125
E. Paul Durrenberger
9 Industrial work 141
Jonathan Parry
10 Money: one anthropologist's view 160
Keith Hart
11 Finance 176
Bill Maurer
12 Distribution and redistribution 194
Thomas C. Patterson

13 Consumption 210
Rudi Colloredo-Mansfeld

PART III CIRCULATION

Introduction 229
14 Ceremonial exchange 230
Andrew Strathern and Pamela J. Stewart
15 The gift and gift economy 246
Yunxiang Yan
16 Barter 262
Patrick Heady
17 The anthropology of markets 275
Kalman Applbaum
18 One-way economic transfers 290
Robert C. Hunt

PART IV INTEGRATIONS

Introduction 305
19 Culture and economy 306
Michael Blim
20 Gender 323
Maila Stivens
21 Economy and religion 339
Simon Coleman
22 Economies of ethnicity 353
Thomas Hylland Eriksen
23 Environment and economy: mutual connections and diverse perspectives 370
Eric Hirsch

PART V ISSUES

Introduction 389
24 Economic anthropology and ethics 390
Peter Luetchford
25 Households and their markets in the Andes 405
Enrique Mayer
26 Peasants 423
Mark Harris
27 Value: anthropological theories of value 439
David Graeber

28 Value: economic valuations and environmental policy 455
Catherine Alexander
29 Anthropology and development: the uneasy relationship 472
David Lewis

PART VI REGIONS

Introduction 489
30 South America 490
Terry Roopnaraine
31 Africa south of the Sahara 500
Mahir Şaul
32 The Near East 515
Julia Elyachar
33 South Asia 526
John Harriss
34 East Asia 537
J.S. Eades
35 Postsocialist societies 547
Chris Hann

Index 559

Contributors

Catherine Alexander teaches anthropology at Goldsmiths College, London. She has worked in Turkey, Kazakhstan and Britain on issues of urban governance, privatisation, property and the built environment. Her recent publications include *Personal states: making connections between people and bureaucracy in Turkey* (2002) and contributions to the *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Focaal: European Journal of Anthropology* (special issue on cultural property) and the collection edited by C. Humphrey and K. Verdery, *Property in question: appropriation, recognition and value transformation in the global economy* (2004).

Kalman Applbaum teaches anthropology at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. He has conducted research in Japan, Israel and the United States. Among his publications are *The marketing era* (2003), *Consumption and market society in Israel* (2004, ed. with Y. Carmeli) and *Knowledge and verification* (*Social Analysis* special issue, Volume 47, 2003, ed. with I. Jordt).

Michael Blim teaches anthropology at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. He is the author of *Made in Italy: small-scale industrialization and its consequences* (1990) and of the forthcoming *Equality and economy: the global challenge* (2004). He is the co-editor of *Anthropology and the global factory* (1992, ed. with F. Rothstein).

James G. Carrier has studied exchange processes in Papua New Guinea, the United States and Great Britain. He has taught at universities in those countries, and is presently Senior Research Associate at Oxford Brookes University and Adjunct Professor of Anthropology at Indiana University. His main publications in economic anthropology include *Wage, trade and exchange in Melanesia* (1989, with A. Carrier), *Gifts and commodities: exchange and Western capitalism since 1700* (1995), *Meanings of the market* (1997, ed.) and *Virtualism: a new political economy* (1998, ed. with D. Miller).

Simon Coleman is Professor of Anthropology at the University of Sussex. His current research areas include the global spread of conservative Protestantism, pilgrimage and the politics of hospital architecture. His publications include *The globalisation of charismatic Christianity* (2000), *Reframing pilgrimage*

(2004, ed. with J. Eade) and 'The charismatic gift' (*Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 2004).

Rudi Colloredo-Mansfeld teaches anthropology at the University of Iowa. His past research examines connections among consumption, economic change and indigenous politics in the Ecuadorian Andes. More recently he has investigated the ways economic competition can build and test community identity. Recent publications include *The native leisure class* (1999) and 'An ethnography of neoliberalism: understanding competition in artisan economies' (*Current Anthropology* 2002).

E. Paul Durrenberger has done fieldwork among highland tribal people and lowland peasants in Northern Thailand, on industrial fishing and farming in Iceland, medieval Iceland, fishing in Mississippi and Alabama, on industrial agriculture in the US Middlewest, on alternative agriculture in Pennsylvania and on labour unions in Chicago and Pennsylvania. His most recent books include *State and community in fisheries management: power, policy, and practice* (2000, with T. King) and *Tell us something we don't know: activism and anthropology in a union local* (2004, with S. Erem). He has recently edited the Society for Economic Anthropology's work on labour, *Anthropology of work* (2004, ed. with J. Marti).

J.S. Eades is Director of the Media Resource Center at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, Japan, and Senior Honorary Research Fellow in Anthropology at the University of Kent. After working for many years on West Africa, his current research interests are migration, urbanisation, tourism and higher education in the Asia-Pacific region. Recent books include *Tokyo* (1999), *Globalization and social change in contemporary Japan* (2000, ed. with T. Gill and H. Befu) and *Globalization in Southeast Asia* (2003, ed. with S. Yamashita).

Julia Elyachar is Assistant Professor and Director of Graduate Studies in Near Eastern Studies at New York University. She is the author of 'Mappings of power: the state, NGOs, and international organizations in the informal economy of Cairo' (*Comparative Studies in Society and History* 2003) and 'Empowerment money: the World Bank, non-governmental organizations, and the value of culture in Egypt' (*Public Culture* 2002). Her book *Markets of Dispossession* is forthcoming (2005) with Duke University Press.

Thomas Hylland Eriksen is Professor of Social Anthropology at the University of Oslo. He has done fieldwork in Trinidad and Mauritius, and has published extensively on ethnicity, nationalism, globalisation and general

anthropology. His most recent books in English are *Tyranny of the moment* (2001), *A history of anthropology* (2001, with F.S. Nielsen), *Ethnicity and nationalism* (2nd ed., 2002) and *Globalisation: studies in anthropology* (2003).

David Graeber teaches anthropology at Yale University. He has written on political anthropology in Madagascar, manners, value theory, and is currently working on a project involving the ethnography of direct action. His recent work includes *Toward an anthropological theory of value: the false coin of our own dreams* (2001).

Stephen Gudeman, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Minnesota, carries out fieldwork in Latin America. Some of his works, emphasising the relation between culture and economy, include *The anthropology of economy* (2001), *Conversations in Colombia* (1990, with A. Rivera), *Economics as culture* (1986) and *The demise of a rural economy* (1978).

Chris Hann is a Director of the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle, Germany. He is a specialist on rural eastern Europe (see, for example, *Tázlár: a village in Hungary*, 1980) and has also carried out fieldwork in North-West China and in Turkey (*Turkish region: state, market and social identities on the east Black Sea coast*, 2000, with I. Béller-Hann). Most of his current projects focus on postsocialist transformation in Eurasia (for example, *The postsocialist agrarian question*, 2003, with the 'Property Relations' Group).

Mark Harris teaches at the University of St Andrews. He is writing on colonial and imperial Brazil. His main publication is *Life on the Amazon: the anthropology of a Brazilian peasant village* (2000).

John Harriss is Professor of Development Studies and Director of the Development Studies Institute at the London School of Economics, and is affiliated with the Department of Anthropology. His current research interests are in institutional theories, in representation and the poor in Indian cities and in the social and cultural implications of globalisation in India. His recent publications include *Reinventing India: liberalization, Hindu nationalism and popular democracy* (2000, with S. Corbridge) and *Depoliticising development: the World Bank and social capital* (2002).

Keith Hart lives in Paris and teaches anthropology part-time at Goldsmiths College, London. He contributed the concept of the informal economy to

development studies and has taught in many universities around the world. His latest book is *Money in an unequal world* (www.the memorybank.co.uk).

Patrick Heady is a research associate of the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle, Germany. His research interests focus on the conditions for cooperative action and on the relationship between the pragmatic and symbolic aspects of social organisation and behaviour, and he has conducted research in the Italian Alps and more recently in Russia. His publications include *The hard people: rivalry, sympathy and social structure in an alpine valley* (1999), *Conceiving persons: ethnographies of procreation, fertility and growth* (1999, ed. with P. Loizos) and *Distinct inheritances: property, family and community in a changing Europe* (2003, ed. with H. Grandits).

Eric Hirsch teaches anthropology at Brunel University, London. His research focuses on the historical anthropology of landscape, power and property relations in Melanesia and on the mutual influences of new technologies and domestic relations in Greater London. Among his publications are *Consuming technologies: media and information in domestic spaces* (1992, ed. with R. Silverstone), *The anthropology of landscape: perspectives on place and space* (1995, ed. with M. O'Hanlon), and *Transactions and creations: property debates and the stimulus of Melanesia* (2004, ed. with M. Strathern).

Robert C. Hunt is Professor Emeritus in Anthropology at Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts. His current research interests include the analysis of allocation (including markets and money), property, production and the social structure of canal irrigation. His publications include 'The role of bureaucracy in the provisioning of cities: a framework for the analysis of the Ancient Near East' (1987 in M. Gibson and R.D. Biggs (eds), *The organization of power: aspects of bureaucracy in the Ancient Near East*), 'Bundles of assets in exchanges: integrating the formal and informal in canal irrigation' (1990 in M.E. Smith (ed.), *Perspectives on the informal economy*), *Property in economic context* (1998, ed. with A. Gilman) and 'Labor productivity and agricultural development: Boserup revisited' (2000, *Human Ecology* 28, 2003).

Barry L. Isaac is Emeritus Professor of Anthropology at the University of Cincinnati. He was editor of *Research in Economic Anthropology* from 1983 to 2000. At present, he is co-authoring a book on the evolving social stratification and economic systems of Central Mexico from 1500 to 2000.

David Lewis is Reader in Social Policy at the London School of Economics.

His research has mainly been focused on Bangladesh and he has specialised in the study of agrarian change, international development policy and the rise of non-governmental organisations. His publications include *Anthropology, development and the postmodern challenge* (1996, with K. Gardner) and *The management of non-governmental organisations* (2001).

Peter Luetchford recently completed his PhD at the University of Sussex, where he now teaches economic and political anthropology. His research focuses on meanings and practices surrounding Fair Trade deals among coffee producers and cooperatives in Costa Rica. He is currently working on publications that offer an ethnographic perspective on Fair Trade.

Bill Maurer teaches anthropology at the University of California, Irvine. His research focuses on cultural formations of finance. His book, *Recharting the Caribbean: land, law and citizenship in the British Virgin Islands* (1997) explores an offshore financial services economy. Other research on offshore finance, Islamic banking and alternative currencies appears in the *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, *American Ethnologist*, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* and *Economy and Society*.

Enrique Mayer specialises in Andean agricultural systems and Latin American peasants. He began his career in Peru, worked for the Organization of American States in Mexico, and in universities in the United States. He is now Professor of Anthropology at Yale University. His most recent book is *The articulated peasant: household economies in the Andes* (2002).

Susana Narotzky is Professor Titular of Social Anthropology at the Universitat de Barcelona. Her research has focused on issues of work, gender and the construction of cultural hegemonies in Europe, and stresses a historical approach to present-day economic relations, political tensions, struggles and cultural constructs. She has done fieldwork in Catalonia and Valencia, and is presently doing research on memory and political agency in Galicia. Among her publications are *Trabajar en familia. Mujeres, hogares y talleres* (1988), *New directions in economic anthropology* (1997) and *La antropología de los pueblos de España. Historia, cultura y lugar* (2002).

Sutti Ortiz is Professor Emerita at Boston University. She is the author of *Harvesting coffee, bargaining wages: rural labor markets in Colombia, 1975–1990* (1999) and two essays on the topic of labour: 'Bargaining wages and controlling performance: harvest labor in coffee and citrus' (2004 in E.P. Durrenberger and J.E. Marti (eds), *Anthropology of work*) and 'Laboring in the factories and the fields' (*Annual Review of Anthropology* 2002). Her earlier research focused on decision making in peasant agriculture.

Jonathan Parry is Professor of Anthropology at the London School of Economics. He has done field research in various parts of north and central India on various different topics. His publications include *Caste and kinship in Kangra* (1979), *Death in Banaras* (1994), *Death and the regeneration of life* (1982, ed. with M. Bloch), *Money and the morality of exchange* (1989, ed. with M. Bloch), *The worlds of Indian industrial labour* (1999, ed. with J. Breman and K. Kapadia) and *Institutions and inequalities* (1999, ed. with R. Guha).

Thomas C. Patterson is Distinguished Professor and Chair of Anthropology at the University of California, Riverside. His current research interests are comparative political economy, archaeology, Marxist social theory and the history of anthropological thought. His recent publications include: *Marx's ghost: conversations with archaeologists* (2003), *A social history of anthropology in the United States* (2001) and *Change and development in the twentieth century* (1999).

Don Robotham is Professor of Anthropology at the Graduate Center, City University of New York. He was educated at the University of the West Indies and the University of Chicago where he obtained his PhD. He has done fieldwork and published on mineworkers in Ghana and the development problems of the English-speaking Caribbean. He is currently completing a book entitled *Culture, society, economy: bringing the economy back in* (2004).

Terry Roopnaraine has research interests in extractive industries, development and economic transformation in Amazonia. Major research projects have included a study of gold and diamond miners and work on palm heart extraction in Guyana, published as 'Constrained trade and creative exchange on the Barima River, Guyana' (*Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 2001). He has held a Research Fellowship at Jesus College, Cambridge and has lectured in anthropology at the London School of Economics. Since 2001, he has worked as a freelance development consultant in Kosovo and Nicaragua.

Mahir Şaul teaches in the department of anthropology at the University of Illinois, Urbana. He has published articles on West African rural domestic organisation, trade, agriculture, ecological history, land holding and Islam, in *American Ethnologist*, *American Anthropologist*, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, *Africa*, *Journal of Modern African Studies* and *Journal des Africanistes*. His most recent book is *West African challenge to empire: culture and history in the Volta-Bani anticolonial war* (2001, with P. Royer).

Pamela J. Stewart and **Andrew Strathern** are partners who conduct research in Papua New Guinea, Scotland, Ireland and Taiwan. They are both in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Pittsburgh and they have published many articles and books on wide-ranging topics. Their most recent co-edited books include *Landscape, memory, and history: anthropological perspectives* (2003), and *Terror and violence: imagination and the unimaginable* (2005, ed. with N.L. Whitehead). Their recent co-authored books include *Violence: theory and ethnography* (2002), *Witchcraft, sorcery, rumors, and gossip* (2004) and *Empowering the past, confronting the future* (2004). They co-edit the *Journal of Ritual Studies* and are Series Editors of *Anthropology and Cultural History in Asia and the Indo-Pacific* (Ashgate Publishing).

Maila Stivens is Director of Gender Studies at the University of Melbourne and a fellow at the Asia Research Institute in Singapore in 2004. Her research has included gender and underdevelopment in rural Malaysia, the new Malay middle classes and the Asian family. Her main recent publications include *Matriliny and modernity: sexual politics and social change in rural Malaysia* (1996), *Gender and power in affluent Asia* (1998, ed. with K. Sen) and *Human rights and gender politics: Asia-Pacific perspectives* (2000, ed. with A.-M. Hilsdon, M. Macintyre and V. Mackie).

Yunxiang Yan is Professor of Anthropology at the University of California, Los Angeles. He is the author of *The flow of gifts: reciprocity and social networks in a Chinese village* (1996) and *Private life under socialism: love, intimacy, and family change in a Chinese village, 1949–1999* (2003). His current research interests include urban consumerism and the impact of cultural globalisation on Chinese society.

Preface and acknowledgements

Those who work in economic anthropology are aware of the importance of the economy in public thought and debate. In retrospect, Adam Smith might well have titled his book *The health of nations*, for in our day, if not in his, it seems that the health of a country is defined by its wealth, just as the final judgement of an activity is its bottom line, how it gains or loses money. And overweening in our day is economics, whether the formal, theoretical economics of scholars like Gary Becker, the more applied economics of bodies like the Federal Reserve Board or the Bank of England, or the less rigorous economics of public thought and debate.

This state of affairs is likely both to exhilarate and to distress anthropologists who work on economy. It exhilarates because it points out the importance of what they study, which is, after all, economic life. It is likely to distress because the economic life that they see in their research often looks so different from the world construed by those theoretical, applied and popular economics. And the word 'world' is not simple hyperbole, for economics, talk of economy, touches on and assumes so much about human life: what it means to be a person, how people think and act, what value is and what is valued, how people relate to and deal with one another.

Perhaps the exhilaration, or maybe just the prospect of it, outweighs the distress at the start of the century. The end of history that was foretold with the fall of the Berlin Wall has not come to pass. The economic policies and assumptions that came to predominate in the United Kingdom and the United States, and the Washington Consensus that sought to make those policies and assumptions global, look much less secure panaceas than they did when they were presented, bright and shiny, by Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher. The neoliberalism and free trade of the World Trade Organisation, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund attract significant dissent.

In such times, it is understandable that economic anthropologists would have some hope that their view of the world, the world implied in their view of economic life, might stimulate those who think not just about the wealth of nations, but also about their health. Indeed, in the past few years there has been a minor boom in works by economic anthropologists that, explicitly or implicitly, challenge not just specific elements of conventional economic thought, but also the fundamental ways that it construes economic life and social life more generally.

Thus it is that this handbook is timely. Saying this does not mean that dissent strides across each page, parading itself in capital letters. That is not

the purpose of this work, which is one of reference rather than advocacy. Rather, what the contributors do in their chapters is present the texture of the sub-discipline's view of economic life. Moreover, that texture does not uniformly provide grounds for dissent: careful readers will see much that accords with conventional economic thought of one sort or another. However, those careful readers also will see that even the chapters that accord with that thought exhibit a more profound questioning. This questioning sees that thought not as a self-evident truth or a valid statement about human nature, but as a rough model that seems to work in specific areas of specific people's lives and, moreover, that seems to do so for social and political reasons. But this is to be expected of economic anthropologists, who are concerned not with the nature of economic thought and action in themselves, but with the place of economy in people's lives and thoughts.

This handbook is unlike any project I have undertaken. This is true not only of its scope, but also of its purpose and intended readership. I am used to works that revolve around a central argument or theme; this one, instead, is more one of reference and consultation. I am used to works that have a fairly narrow focus; this one covers a sub-discipline. I am used to works that have seven or eight contributors at most; this one has over thirty. I am used to works that are aimed at fellow anthropologists who might be interested in its theme; this one is aimed at those outside the discipline who might be interested in what economic anthropologists have to say about one or another aspect of social or economic life.

All these differences mean that I have had to draw on the advice and knowledge of many people. Almost all the contributors were helpful in suggesting people I might approach for other contributions; and all of them were not only tolerant of my editorial nervousness, but also helped me to see where I was wrong, and did so gracefully. The contributors have my thanks.

There are, however, people whom I pestered for help more than others, and who provided help in surprising amounts. These people deserve special mention, not least because some of them were unable to contribute to this handbook because of the burden of their existing work. They are John Comaroff, Fred Damon, Jerry Eades, Richard Fardon, Stephen Gudeman, Chris Hann, Keith Hart, Danny Miller, Alan Smart and Richard Wilk. I hope that they are satisfied with the results of their help, and with my modest thanks.

Introduction

James G. Carrier

This is a handbook. So, it is not something that lays out a coherent argument in an extended form. Rather, it is a set of chapters that cover economic-anthropological work on specific topics and in specific regions of the world. At the same time, however, these chapters all revolve around economic anthropology. It seems appropriate, then, to include in this introduction to the whole a presentation of what I think economic anthropology is, if only because this thinking has shaped the organisation of this handbook. Because this work is oriented to those unfamiliar with economic anthropology, and perhaps unfamiliar with anthropology, that presentation will cover some material that may seem common sense to those familiar with the sub-discipline or the discipline as a whole. Those who are not novices may want to skip the opening section of this Introduction and go to the section titled 'Approaching economic life'. Those wholly familiar with the field may want to skip to the final section of this Introduction, which explains the orientation of this work.

Economy anthropologically

At the most basic, economic anthropology is the description and analysis of economic life, using an anthropological perspective. This is self-evident and not very helpful, so I want to explain briefly what 'anthropological perspective' and 'economic life' mean. What I write here is only a sketch of the terrain revealed more fully in the chapters in this handbook, and as these chapters show, different sub-parts of economic anthropology address different aspects of economic life differently, as, of course, do different individual scholars. This divergence needs to be kept in mind. While much of what I say here refers rather blandly to 'economic anthropology', I write of tendencies that characterise the whole, which is the result of the interchange among different individuals and schools (many of which are presented in the chapters that make up this handbook). While I think it best to consider economic anthropology as a collaborative, and combative, field, no one scholar need exhibit all the characteristics that I present.

The anthropological perspective approaches and locates aspects of people's individual and collective lives, which is to say their lives and societies, in terms of how these aspects relate to one another in an interconnected, though not necessarily bounded or very orderly, whole. The aspects at issue can be different elements or fields of people's lives, such as religious belief,

consumption, household organisation, productive activities or the like. So, for example, an anthropologist might want to study how household organisation among a particular set of people is related to, say, religious belief, and vice versa (in an ideal world that anthropologist would want to know how all the elements of people's lives and societies are related to one another). As this suggests, anthropologists tend to want to see people's lives in the round.

A different set of aspects of people's lives and societies is important as well, one that cuts across the sort of aspects I pointed to in the preceding paragraph. Anthropologists tend to want to know about the relationship between what people think and say on the one hand, and on the other what they do. These two aspects can have different labels as disciplinary interest and fashion change, but they can be cast as culture on the one hand and practice on the other. These can be approached to see the extent to which practices shape culture (and vice versa) and how they do so. This can be part of an effort to understand how, say, exchange practices affect people's understandings of the kin groups involved in exchange (and vice versa), or how, say, practices in brokerage firms affect people's understandings of stock exchanges (and, once more, vice versa).

However, there is another way that culture and practice can be approached: the differences between them can be important for helping the researcher to achieve a deeper understanding of the lives of the people being studied. For instance, if we talk to those who manage pension funds, we may hear them say that they evaluate investment firms carefully in terms of their performance before deciding whether to use them to invest a portion of the pension's funds. From this, we may conclude that fund managers are relatively rational calculators who use objective data to reach their decisions; after all, that is what they tell us, and it makes sense in terms of what everyone knows about investing money. However, we may observe that, once hired by fund managers, an investment firm is almost never fired, even if its returns are poor (see O'Barr and Conley 1992). This anomalous relationship between what people say and what they do can offer the researcher an insight into the nature of fund management that is more rewarding than is available if we attend only to what managers say or what they do.

What I have said thus far points to two further features of the anthropological perspective that are worth mentioning. The first of these is that the perspective is fundamentally empirical and naturalistic. It rests on the observation (empirical) of people's lives as they live them (naturalistic). The discipline, at least in its modern form, emerged in the person of Bronislaw Malinowski, who taught at the London School of Economics early in the twentieth century. And he is the origin of modern anthropology because he carried out, and demonstrated the significance of, extended fieldwork; in his case, several years living in the midst of a set of people in what is now Papua

New Guinea, observing and participating in their lives (see Malinowski 1922, 1926, 1935). Extended participant observation, empirical naturalism, has come to define the field. Thus, anthropologists are uneasy with the sort of experiments that have been common in social psychology, are found to a lesser degree in sociology, and that appear from time to time in economics. They might be intrigued by the finding that people in an experimental setting are willing to spend surrogate tokens of wealth to reduce the token holdings of some of their fellow experimental subjects (Zizzo and Oswald 2001). Given that it is based on experiment, this finding is empirical. However, because the experimental setting is precisely not naturalistic, anthropologists would be likely to take it as little more than an interesting idea that could be investigated through fieldwork.

The second further feature I want to mention is of a different order. In part because of the importance of extended participant observation and in part because of the concern to approach people's lives in the round, anthropologists generally are reluctant to think in terms of social laws and universals. Anthropologists have studied a large number of societies in different parts of the world, and have come up with almost no social laws that apply throughout specific regions, much less that apply globally. Put differently, anthropology tends to be an idiographic or particularising discipline, rather than a nomothetic or generalising one. As this might suggest, anthropologists tend to be unhappy with things like the assumptions that underlie the idea of utility maximisation. They are even unhappy with things like Adam Smith's (1976 [1776]: 17) famous assertion that there is 'a certain propensity in human nature … to truck, barter, and exchange one thing for another'. Certainly anthropologists would agree that people transact things, and indeed the study of such transactions is a central aspect of a great deal of anthropological work. However, they might well point out that this work indicates that people in different situations in the same society, not to mention in different societies, transact in different ways and understand what they are doing in different ways. Consequently, while they might well see the logic and attraction of generalisations and even universal laws, they would be prone to think that these are of little use in the practical disciplinary task of seeing how people live their lives: they would have to be qualified and elaborated so much in terms of local context that they would be almost unrecognisable as universals.

I have laid out some of the pertinent features of the anthropological perspective, through which economic anthropologists generally view economic life. I turn now, and more briefly, to the definition of that life common in economic anthropology. Economic life is the activities through which people produce, circulate and consume things, the ways that people and societies secure their subsistence or provision themselves. It is important to note, though, that 'things' is an expansive term. It includes material objects,

but also includes the immaterial: labour, services, knowledge and myth, names and charms, and so on. In different times and places, different ones of these will be important resources in social life, and when they are important they come within the purview of economic anthropologists.

In other words, where some economists have identified economic life in terms of the sorts of mental calculus that people use and the decisions that they make (for example, utility maximisation), which stresses the form of thought of the person being studied, most economic anthropologists would identify it in terms of the substance of the activity; even those who attend to the mental calculus are likely to do so in ways that differ from what is found in formal economics (for example, Gudeman 1986; Gudeman and Rivera 1991). This substance includes markets in the conventional sense, whether village markets in the Western Pacific or stock markets in the First World. However, these markets are only a sub-set of economic life, and in accord with their tendency to see the interconnections in social life, economic anthropologists tend to situate things like markets or other forms of circulation, or production or consumption, in larger social and cultural frames, in order to see how markets, to continue the example, affect and are affected by other areas of life.

This contextualisation operates at a more general level as well. So, while anthropologists would recognise the growing importance of the economy in how people in Western societies understand their world over the past couple of centuries (Dumont 1977), they would not take the nature of 'the economy' as given or its growing importance as self-evident (for example, Carrier 1997; Carrier and Miller 1998; Dilley 1992; Friedland and Robertson 1990). This indicates that for many economic anthropologists, it is not just economic life that merits investigation. So too does the idea of economy, its contents, contexts and saliences, and the uses to which it is put.

Approaching economic life

In the preceding paragraphs I have sketched conceptual aspects of the ways that economic anthropologists approach economic life. The main features of this are the concern to place people's economic activities, their thoughts and beliefs about those activities and the social institutions implicated in those activities, all within the context of the social and cultural world of the people being studied. This reflects the assumption that economic life cannot be understood unless it is seen in terms of people's society and culture more generally. However, the sub-discipline's approach to economic life has more aspects than just the conceptual. Here I want to describe some other aspects, beginning with what I shall call methodology.

Economic anthropologists approach the relationship between economic life and the rest of social life in different ways, but these can, without too much distortion, be reduced to two broad types, the individual and the systemic.

While these types characterise the sub-discipline as a whole when viewed over the course of time, their visibility has varied historically and, to a degree, it has varied among different national anthropological traditions.

The individualist methodology, as the label indicates, approaches the relationship of economic and social life through the study of the beliefs and practices of individual members of the group being investigated. This individualist method is old, for it characterises the work of the man who, I said, is arguably the founder of modern anthropology, Malinowski. His most famous book is *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (Malinowski 1922); its focus is economic life, exchange in the Trobriand Islands of eastern Melanesia; through it Malinowski sought to challenge important elements of popular-economic thought in his day. To say that Malinowski's methodology in *Argonauts* was individualistic is not to say that he described Trobriand Islanders independent of their society and culture. Rather, what marks his methodology as individualistic is the way that he portrays the focus of the book, which is a form of the ceremonial exchange of valuables called the *kula*. Malinowski portrays the typical activities that make up the typical stages of the typical *kula* exchange, and this typicality is cast as what the typical *kula* exchanger does. Trobriand economic life and its relationship to society more generally, or at least this aspect of it, are construed and presented in terms of the individual islander writ large. Moreover, as Jonathan Parry (1986: 454) notes in his discussion of Malinowski, in *Argonauts* the *kula* exchange system is presented in terms of what are 'essentially *dyadic* transactions between *self-interested individuals*, and as premissed on some kind of *balance*' (original emphasis).

While this individualistic methodology is old in anthropology, the other, the systemic methodology, characterises one of the key forebears of the discipline, Émile Durkheim (for example, 1951 [1897], 1965 [1915], 1984 [1893]). One of Durkheim's important goals was to establish sociology as an academic discipline in France, and to do so he argued that society is more than just a collection of individuals (or even Malinowskian individuals writ large). Rather, he treated society as a superordinate system or set of inter-related parts, with properties of its own. In this he was doing what Malinowski was to do later, challenging important elements of the popular-economic thought of his day, though he did so in a very different way. His methodology, like his challenge, is most apparent in *The division of labour in society* (1984 [1893]). The title says it: individuals do not have a division of labour, groups or societies do. In this work, Durkheim classified societies in terms of the degree of their division of labour, which he related to a range of other societal attributes, especially their legal systems.

Durkheim's systemic methodology influenced anthropology directly through his own works, and also through the writings of his nephew, Marcel

Mauss, especially in *The gift* (1990 [1925]). A more recent, influential example of this methodology is in *Maidens, meal and money*, by Claude Meillassoux (1981). In this book, Meillassoux addresses, among other things, the question of the nature of village societies in colonial Africa, societies that he views as systems and as explicable in terms of their relationships with other systems. He argues that the village and the colonial orders are in a symbiotic relationship. In other words, it is the interest of colonial governments and firms in inexpensive labour of a certain sort that leads to a relationship between urban and village sectors in colonial Africa that brings something that looks very close to the creation of 'traditional villages', with their kinship and age structures, exchange systems and the like (a similar argument is in Carrier and Carrier 1989).

I said that the individualist and systemic methodologies vary in their visibility in economic anthropology. This variation is a consequence of the fact that economic anthropologists are affected by larger currents within anthropology and the larger world. Broadly, though, American economic anthropology has tended towards the individualist pole. British anthropology, more heavily influenced by Durkheim, tended towards the systemic pole until the 1980s, at which time the individualist methodology became popular. As well, there have been differences among different schools of anthropology: structural functionalism, predominant in Britain for decades but also apparent in some American anthropology, tends to a systemic approach, as do the Marxist and political-economy schools within the sub-discipline.

The differences among economic anthropologists that I have presented thus far are cross-cut by others, two of which I want to mention. These concern the scope of analysis and the structure of the field.

Like its parent discipline, economic anthropology is based on the empirical naturalism of sustained fieldwork. Historically, this has been expressed in the ethnographic monograph, of which Malinowski's *Argonauts* is an excellent example, in which the author presents a sustained and detailed description of the set of people being studied. However, the attention to local detail expressed in descriptive ethnography has always been complemented, albeit in varying degrees, by a more encompassing concern with regional variation. How do these people resemble or differ from other people, whether near by or more distant?

Several decades ago, A.R. Radcliffe-Brown laid out the difference between these two forms of anthropology, and what he said applies as well to economic anthropology. He drew a distinction between ethnography and what he called 'comparative sociology': 'a theoretical or nomothetic study of which the aim is to provide acceptable generalisation' (Radcliffe-Brown 1952: 3). While detailed ethnography may characterise the discipline in the eye of outsiders, the comparative element has always been present and influential. However,

this comparative element often sits uneasily in a discipline the members of which establish their credentials through their ethnographic knowledge and publications concerning a place that is different from others.

The structure of the field is a different matter. Members of the sub-discipline, like anthropologists generally, are influenced by two different intellectual orientations. One of these springs from the ethnographic context: not just the particular place where the researcher has done fieldwork, but the ethnographic region where that place is located: Lowland Latin Americanists think about things differently from East Asianists. The cause may lie in differences between different parts of the world; alternatively, it may lie in differences in the interests and approaches of influential researchers and publications concerned with different regions. But whatever the cause, there are clear differences between the topics that are important in the anthropology of different regions. If this were all there is, of course, the discipline would fall apart, dissolving into groups focused on different parts of the world. This is prevented, in part, by the second orientation I want to mention. That is the intellectual models and arguments that become fashionable generally within the discipline. When the relationship between kinship and political influence, or the difference between gifts and commodities, is in the air, specialists in different regions can and do talk to each other about it, and ethnographic work on a particular region can cross the regional boundary and be read more widely.

Orientation of this work

I have devoted some pages to describing features of the discipline and sub-discipline. I have done so because this handbook is intended to make sense to those outside of anthropology. As well, the desire to have it make sense has led to certain judgements about how the work should be organised and about how chapter authors ought to be encouraged to frame their contributions.

The work as a whole has been divided into a number of parts, each of which has its own brief introduction. I chose this way of doing things because I thought that an orderly presentation would help the whole to be more accessible to readers. This is important if the result is to convey a sense of the sub-discipline as a whole. Concern for accessibility shaped as well the guidance given to contributors. They were urged to remember that readers would not be fellow economic anthropologists, and frequently not anthropologists at all. So, they were urged to avoid specialist terminology as much as possible. As well, they were urged to focus their contributions on a handful of themes pertinent to their specific topics, so that readers would get a sense of the overall orientation of work on a topic rather than be confronted with a less comprehensible welter of details. Finally, they were urged to leaven their thematic presentation with descriptive material, to make the

analytical points at issue clearer to those who had not spent years reading and thinking about the analytical issues involved. The result of all of this is that chapter authors could not say all that they wanted to about their topics. However, they have presented the central features, and their presentations can be read by those other than their fellow specialists.

Throughout this Introduction I have pointed to the diversity within economic anthropology, and this handbook reflects that diversity. The overarching analytical orientations considered in Part I of the handbook give way to more descriptive material in the second and third parts, which present work on the core elements of economic life (Part II) and on a feature of those elements that has been of especial interest to anthropologists, circulation (Part III). Part IV addresses the social contexts and correlates of economic life, such as religion, gender and the like. Part V deals with specific and important contemporary issues in economic anthropology, such as the nature of peasants, the relationship between anthropology and development, and so forth. Finally, Part VI describes work on different ethnographic regions.

I hope that the result will serve a range of different readers, however imperfectly. This includes readers who are interested in what economic anthropology has to say about a specific topic, readers who are interested in the intellectual foundations of the sub-discipline, those interested in a specific region, and those interested in the orientation and nature of the sub-discipline as a whole.

References

Carrier, J.G. (ed.) 1997. *Meanings of the market: the free market in Western culture*. Oxford: Berg.

Carrier, J.G. and A.H. Carrier 1989. *Wage, trade and exchange in Melanesia: a Manus society in the modern state*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Carrier, J.G. and D. Miller (eds) 1998. *Virtualism: a new political economy*. Oxford: Berg.

Dilley, R. (ed.) 1992. *Contesting markets: analyses of ideology, discourse and practice*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Dumont, L. 1977. *From Mandeville to Marx: the genesis and triumph of economic ideology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Durkheim, É. 1951 (1897). *Suicide: a study in sociology*. New York: Free Press.

Durkheim, É. 1965 (1915). *The elementary forms of the religious life*. New York: Free Press.

Durkheim, É. 1984 (1893). *The division of labour in society*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Friedland, R. and A.F. Robertson (eds) 1990. *Beyond the marketplace: rethinking economy and society*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Gudeman, S. 1986. *Economics as culture: models and metaphors of livelihood*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Gudeman, S. and A. Rivera 1991. *Conversations in Colombia: the domestic economy in life and text*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Malinowski, B. 1922. *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Malinowski, B. 1926. *Crime and custom in savage society*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Malinowski, B. 1935. *Coral gardens and their magic*. London: Allen & Unwin.

Mauss, M. 1990 (1925). *The gift: the form and reason for exchange in archaic societies*. London: Routledge.

Meillassoux, C. 1981. *Maidens, meal and money*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

O'Barr, W.M. and J.M. Conley 1992. *Fortune and folly: the wealth and power of institutional investing*. Homewood, Ill.: Business One Irwin.
Parry, J. 1986. *The gift*, the Indian gift and the 'Indian gift'. *Man* (n.s.) 21: 453–73.
Radcliffe-Brown, A.R. 1952. Introduction. In *Structure and function in primitive society*, A.R. Radcliffe-Brown. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
Smith, A. 1976 (1776). *An inquiry into the nature and causes of the wealth of nations*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Zizzo, D.J. and A.J. Oswald 2001. Are people willing to pay to reduce others' incomes? *Annales d'Économie et de Statistique* 63–4: 39–62.

PART I

ORIENTATIONS

Introduction

The first set of chapters in this handbook presents basic approaches and orientations to economic life found in economic anthropology. The first four chapters present established positions within the sub-discipline, and all locate economic life firmly within its broader social and political context: even Ortiz's chapter on decisions and choices shows how these cannot be understood without close attention to the contexts in which they are made. The final two chapters in this part cover relatively new orientations. Narotzky describes an approach focused on the factors affecting the ways that households provision themselves, one which situates households in something like a commodity chain. The final chapter presents a view of economy that relates people's understandings of and transactions involving objects to their understandings of themselves as a group and of their relationships with other groups.

1 Karl Polanyi

Barry L. Isaac

Karl Polanyi (1886–1964) was a Hungarian lawyer turned journalist and economic historian whose reading of anthropology, especially the work of Bronislaw Malinowski and Richard Thurnwald, led him to produce work that made major contributions to economic anthropology, classical Greek studies and post-Soviet eastern European social policy. (This last reflects his lifelong devotion to the question of individual freedom in industrial societies; Polanyi 1936, 1944: 249ff.) In fact, the concepts he developed with the aid of anthropology, and for which he is known in that discipline and in classical studies, were intended as tools for analysing industrial societies and especially for explaining the causes of the Great Depression and the fascism of the 1930s and 1940s (see Goldfrank 1990). His larger aim was to lay the groundwork for a general theory of comparative economics that would accommodate all economies, past and present (see Polanyi 1957; Halperin 1988, 1994a; Stanfield 1986, 1990). His contributions to classical studies fall outside the scope of this chapter (see Duncan and Tandy 1994). In anthropology, his influence was great during the 1960s and 1970s; subsequently, his work became strongly identified with the 'substantivist' side of the strident and irresolvable 'formalist–substantivist' debate, and his prominence faded when the formalists largely won the day.

Polanyi's master work was *The great transformation* (1944), in which he analysed the emergence and (in his view, disastrous) consequences of a new type of economy, market capitalism, first in England during the early nineteenth century and then in the rest of the industrialising world and its global extensions. This new economy was unique in being *disembedded* from the social matrix; in ideal form, at least, it commercialised and commoditised all goods and services in terms of a single standard, money, and set their prices through the self-adjusting mechanism of supply and demand. At all previous times, in contrast, 'man's economy … [was] submerged in his social relationships' (Polanyi 1944: 46), and the factors of production were neither monetised nor commoditised. Instead, access to land and labour was gained through ties of kinship (birth, adoption, marriage) and community. Many pre-capitalist economies had marketplaces, but they did not have self-regulating, supply-and-demand market economies. Similarly, many employed money but only in transactions involving a limited range of goods and services.

By commoditising not only goods but also labour ('another name for a

human activity which goes with life itself') and land ('another name for nature'), the disembedded capitalist (market) economy of nineteenth-century England threatened to remove 'the protective covering of cultural institutions', leaving the common people to 'perish from the effects of social exposure' (Polanyi 1944: 72–3). Accordingly, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries saw a 'double movement': first, the disembedding of the economy under the self-regulating market, then the emergence of countermeasures 'designed to check the action of the market relative to labor, land, and money' (1944: 76). These countermeasures accomplished their purpose politically, by partially re-embedding the economy, typically culminating in state socialism or the welfare state.

The Polanyi group's major concepts

During the 1950s and 1960s, Polanyi and his academic followers, especially anthropologists, developed a set of conceptual tools for analysing pre-capitalist, embedded economies. Their touchstone was Polanyi's (1957: 243) specification of 'two root meanings of "economic," the substantive and the formal':

> The substantive meaning of economic derives from man's dependence for his living upon nature and his fellows. It refers to the interchange with his natural and social environment, in so far as this results in supplying him with the means of material want satisfaction.
>
> The formal meaning of economic derives from the logical character of the means–ends relationship, as apparent in such words as 'economical' or 'economizing'. It refers to a definite situation of choice, namely, that between the different uses of means induced by an insufficiency of those means.

Polanyi (1957: 243) argued that these two meanings of the term 'have nothing in common':

> The latter [formal meaning] derives from logic, the former [substantive meaning] from fact. The formal meaning implies a set of rules referring to choice between the alternative uses of insufficient means. The substantive meaning implies neither choice nor insufficiency of means; man's livelihood may or may not involve the necessity of choice and, if choice there be, it need not be induced by the limiting effect of a 'scarcity' of the means.

The substantive meaning alone is useful for comparative economics, Polanyi argued, because 'formal economics' is applicable only to 'an economy of a definite type, namely, a market system' (1957: 247), in which livelihood routinely involves choice arising from an insufficiency of means (economising). 'This is achieved by generalizing the use of price-making markets' (1957: 247), on which almost all goods and services (including land, labour and capital) are purchasable and from which all income (including

wages, rent and interest) is derived. Thus, livelihood in market economies necessarily involves both buying and selling, and economic means as well as ends are necessarily quantified as money prices. In short, such an economy is 'a sequence of acts of economizing, that is, of choices induced by scarcity situations' (1957: 247), and so is amenable to analysis by 'formal economics'.

All economies have mechanisms of distribution, but only market (capitalist) economies are integrated (primarily) through 'exchange' on price-setting markets. All earlier economies were integrated, instead, mainly through reciprocity and redistribution, even if they had marketplaces. 'Reciprocity denotes movements between correlative points of symmetrical groupings; redistribution designates appropriational movements toward a center and out of it again; exchange refers here to vice-versa movements … between "hands" under a market system' (Polanyi 1957: 250). Market (capitalist) economies typically display all three mechanisms; chiefdoms and non-capitalist states, redistribution as well as reciprocity; acephalous primitive societies, only reciprocity. Polanyi (1944: 53–4) left largely undeveloped a fourth integrative principle, householding, 'production for one's [household's] own use', which occurs 'only on a more advanced level of agriculture' but before capitalism. It was prominent in such 'archaic' states as eighteenth-century Dahomey (Polanyi and Rotstein 1966: 70ff.) and was still observable in the mainly self-provisioning peasant economies of the early twentieth century. Although such peasants typically sold some goods on price-setting markets and periodically worked for wages, market principles fed back upon production decisions only weakly, 'because [self-provisioning] labor and land do not enter the market and basic livelihood is acquired in non-market spheres' (Dalton 1967b: 75; see also Halperin 1991, 1994b; Halperin and Dow 1977).

In short, the mere presence of marketplaces does not necessarily signal a market (capitalist) economy, nor does the mere presence of money. Many pre- or non-capitalist economies had 'moneystuff', but it was *special-purpose money*, rather than the *general-purpose money* that serves as a uniform standard throughout market economies. Because special-purpose money (and the goods or services it purchased) circulated in only part of the economy, pre-capitalist economies were *multicentric*, having two or more 'spheres of exchange'; in contrast, capitalist (market) economies are by definition *unicentric*, because everything, even the factors of production, circulates in an economy unified by the market principle and the universal solvent, general-purpose money.

The Trobriand substantive economy

Malinowski's famous ethnographies of the Trobriand Islands were a major early influence on Polanyi (see Malinowski 1922, 1935; see also Weiner 1988; see Strathern and Stewart chap. 14 infra). The following outline of Trobriand

economy shows why the Polanyi group felt that new, 'substantive' tools were needed for the analysis of pre- or non-capitalist economies, and the kinds of applications they proposed for these tools.

Trobriand economy had three spheres of exchange: subsistence, prestige and *kula*. The main item in the subsistence sphere was the ordinary yam, along with common crafts and pigs (although these last could arguably be placed in the prestige sphere). The yams served two money functions. Within the subsistence sphere, but not in the rest of the economy, they were a medium of exchange. More generally, they were a major mode of non-commercial payment for fulfilling kinship and political obligations, such as tax. The paramount chief had a wife from each village and was brother-in-law to its men, who collectively owed him an annual payment of yams, just as each did to his true sister's husband. Yams also had to be presented at certain points in funerals and marriage arrangements. The stuffs of this sphere (yams, craft goods, pigs) periodically were converted upwards into the banana-leaf bundles of the women's prestige sub-sphere, and pigs could occasionally be converted upward into relatively new, low-prestige *kula* shells.

The Trobriand prestige sphere can be divided into women's and men's sub-spheres. The former had only two items, bundles and skirts made from banana leaves. All adult women made both items, and both had money functions. Bundles were a medium of exchange in that they could be converted downward into the stuffs of the subsistence sphere, but not into the men's prestige sub-sphere or upward into the *kula* sphere. Mainly, though, the bundles and skirts were a mode of non-commercial payment. A woman was obligated to give skirts to her brother's wife upon the latter's marriage, and both bundles and skirts were important mortuary payments. Women of the deceased's matrilineage competed with one another in giving huge quantities of these items to their affinal kin (especially to the deceased's spouse, father and father's sisters), who bore the main burden of public mourning. These latter had to dispel potential accusations of sorcery (thought to cause almost all deaths) through punctilious mourning, while the former wanted to make their matrilineage look strong in the face of the sorcerer's success. 'The key to finding large amounts of bundles is a woman's husband … Because a woman and her husband receive yams from her brother every year, her husband must help her find bundles whenever someone [of her matrilineage] dies' (Weiner 1988: 119–20). He did so by an upward conversion of his subsistence-sphere items (yams, pigs, craft goods) into bundles.

The men's prestige sub-sphere contained stone axe blades, large clay pots, display yams, boars' tusks, certain kinds of canoes, lime spatulas, shell belts, magical spells, sorcerers' services, and perhaps more items prior to European contact. Their money function was limited to modes of non-commercial payment, mainly with the axe blades. These were used as a marriage payment

(bridewealth initially and sporadic gifts thereafter for the duration of the marriage), as blood compensation for homicide, as the final funerary payment to the deceased's spouse and father, and as the annual prize given by the paramount chief to the grower of the largest yams. Some of the items of this sub-sphere could be converted downward into pigs, but they could not be traded for women's skirts and bundles; whether any could be converted upward into *kula* valuables is unclear.

The *kula* sphere comprised two kinds of men's heirloom shell valuables, armshells and necklaces, which were exchanged by hereditary *kula* partners on a chain of islands about 700 miles in circumference. There was a parallel, secondary barter trade in utilitarian items (foodstuffs, raw materials, manufactures), made possible by the ceremonious *kula* linkages. The extent of the connection of the inter-island *kula* exchanges with Trobriand domestic economy is unclear, but it appears that *kula* shells were occasionally converted downward into pigs (subsistence sphere) or to meet men's obligations (for example, bridewealth, blood compensation) in the domestic prestige sphere.

In sum, traditional Trobriand economy had three spheres of exchange, each with its own goods and (in two cases) moneystuffs. Goods moved mainly within their appointed spheres through *reciprocity* governed by the ethics of kinship and hereditary partnership. In addition, the paramount chief was the focal point of *redistribution*; some of the yams he received through formal taxation, as well as the pigs, coconut and betel he commandeered by right of eminent domain, were expended in public feasting or in supporting *kula* expeditions. Although goods of all types moved widely and frequently in Trobriand economy, there was no price-setting market principle; even fixed marketplaces seem to have been absent. Furthermore, neither land nor labour could be purchased or rented; these factors of production were inextricably embedded in the matrix of hereditary kinship, overseen lightly by chiefly eminent domain.

The formalist response

Starting in 1966, a formalist school of economic anthropology arose in opposition to the Polanyi group's substantivist school (see Cook 1966a, 1966b, 1969; LeClair and Schneider 1968; Schneider 1974). The formalist attack was two-pronged: (1) that the models developed by microeconomics were universally applicable and, thus, superior to substantivism for both economic anthropology and comparative economics; and (2) that economic anthropology was no longer primarily concerned with the kinds of economies (primitive, 'archaic' state, peasant) for which the substantivists' tools were developed.

Scott Cook, launching the formalist–substantivist debate, characterised economic anthropology as being split between formalists 'who believe that the

difference between Western-type market and primitive-subsistence economies is one of degree' and substantivists 'who believe it is one of kind' (Cook 1966a: 327). Harold Schneider (1974: 9), who eventually became the dominant figure in the formalist school, stated it this way: 'The unifying element among … formalists is, in contrast to substantivists, the partial or total acceptance of the cross-cultural applicability of formal [microeconomic] theory'.

The underlying methodological question was that of the proper unit of analysis. Because the formalists focused upon choice, which is always individual, their approach necessarily entailed methodological individualism. The substantivists, on the other hand, focused upon the institutional matrix in which choice occurs (see Cancian 1966: 466).

Maximisation was a key concept for the formalists, as microeconomic models assumed that the economic choices made by individuals were intended to maximise, or at least optimise, utility. Substantivists, on the other hand, dismissed maximisation as irrelevant or inapplicable to a truly comparative economics. 'Patterned responses (or processes) in cultural systems cannot be accounted for by methodological individualism … [which likewise] cannot explain why cross-cultural differences or similarities occur' (Halperin 1994a: 13). Furthermore, 'if we posit the same rational, utilitarian motives to individuals in all cultures … all economic processes in all cultures would appear to be identical' (1994a: 13), leaving the patent cross-cultural differences in economic institutions unexplained (see Isaac 1993: 223–5, 1996: 314–17, 329–32). Why, for instance, does one society define and maximise wealth in terms of outstanding reciprocal obligations, whereas another does so in terms of purchasing power to acquire material possessions? More generally, all economies have certain common features – 'exchanges, allocations, transfers, and appropriations of resources, labor, produce, and services' – yet they differ in 'how resources are directed to specific uses, how production is organized, and how goods are disposed of – in short, how the economy is instituted' (Dalton 1968: xvi, after Polanyi 1957). Overlooking such differences leads us into the trap of false equations: 'To call a cat a quadruped, and then to say that because cats and dogs are both quadrupeds I shall call them all cats, does not change the nature of cats. Neither does it confuse dogs; it merely confuses the reader' (Dalton 1966: 733–4; also see Sahlins 1960).

The formalists also argued that a deeper philosophical issue, induction versus deduction, lay behind the formalist–substantivist debate (Cook 1966b). Within this framework, Cook (1966a: 327) characterised the substantivists pejoratively as 'romanticists':

> The Formalists … focus on abstractions unlimited by time and place, and … are prone to introspection or are synchronically oriented; they are scientific in outlook

> and mathematical in inclination, favor the deductive mode of inquiry, and are basically analytical in methodology … The Romanticists … focus on situations limited in time and space, and … are prone to retrospection or are diachronically oriented; they are humanistic in outlook and nonmathematical in inclination, favor the inductive mode of inquiry, and are basically synthetic in methodology … [T]he concern [here] will be to link Polanyi and his followers to the Romanticist tradition.

That the debate could be cast in terms of humanists (substantivists) versus nomothetical scientists (formalists) reveals why it could not be resolved. In a nutshell, it involved philosophical issues that are larger than economic anthropology or even anthropology as a whole. The kinds of oppositions that structured the formalist–substantivist debate are irresolvable social science perennials. Tom Campbell (1981) delineated five of them: idealist–materialist, descriptive–normative, individualistic–holistic, conflict–consensus, positivist–interpretative. Elman Service (1987) pointed to eight such 'bifurcations' in the history of anthropology, including positivism–humanism, comparative method–holism, generalisation–particularism and evolution–relativity. In economics, similar oppositions exist between institutionalists and conventional microeconomists (see Dowling 1979; Neale 1990; Stanfield 1986: 18, 132ff.). None of these tensions can be resolved in an either–or manner, whether philosophically, methodologically or analytically, except in relation to specific research problems or as a matter of personal preference.

Cook's use of the pejorative 'romanticist' to characterise the substantivists signals the debate's second dimension, alluded to earlier. While Cook accepted substantivism as 'one meaningful approach' to the study of 'extinct' and 'primitive' economies, he rejected it on the grounds that economic anthropology no longer concerned itself primarily with such economies, which were 'rapidly disappearing as ethnographic entities, being displaced by market-influenced or -dominated transitional and peasant economies' (Cook 1966a: 325). The economic anthropology of the future, in contrast, 'will be focused on development – the peasantization of the primitive and the proletarianization of the peasant'. Accordingly, it will require 'the sophisticated model-building skills of the economist' (1966a: 337–8).

George Dalton, who became the leading substantivist spokesman after Polanyi's death in 1964, largely agreed that substantivism was apposite only for 'aboriginal (pre-colonial) economies in stateless societies', 'aboriginal (pre-colonial) economies in tribal kingdoms' and 'early, traditional, pre-modern sub-sets of peasantries in states' (Dalton 1990: 166–7). Polanyi would have been deeply shocked that his leading acolyte took that position, because Polanyi's motivation for studying ancient and non-Western economies was to construct a truly universal framework for comparative economics. As we shall see, Dalton's constrictive outlook, echoing as it did the formalists' position, contributed to substantivism's decline in the 1980s and 1990s.

During the 1960s and 1970s, sociocultural anthropology's core group was evolutionary (cross-temporal) and broadly comparative (cross-cultural) in outlook, and especially in the Americas was closely linked to ethnohistory and archaeology. This was the anthropological framework addressed by the interdisciplinary Polanyi group that coalesced around the master at Columbia University in New York in 1947–53 and issued the seminal *Trade and market in the early empires* (Polanyi, Arensberg and Pearson 1957). Following Polanyi's death in 1964 and in the wake of the enormous success of the 1957 book, his followers continued to address that framework. In anthropology, his mantle was assumed by economist-turned-anthropologist Dalton, who collaborated both formally and informally throughout his career with anthropologist Paul Bohannan, his colleague at Northwestern University. Dalton ignored Polanyi's larger purposes, perhaps because they involved a critique of capitalism and of industrial societies generally, and kept substantivism's focus upon pre-industrial societies. This left substantivism largely stranded when sociocultural anthropology turned increasingly towards the study of contemporary populations during the 1980s and 1990s. Because these populations had economies that both the formalists and Dalton, the leading substantivist spokesman, agreed required 'formal economics' for their analysis, economic anthropology became predominantly formalist and virtually synonymous with studies of Third-World economic development (see Isaac 1993).

Polanyi also would have been bemused by Dalton's (1981) vehement insistence, long after the threat of censure against Marxists had vanished in Western countries, that Polanyi's thinking had no intellectual connection whatsoever with Marxism. In retrospect, it is difficult to explain how Dalton, who claimed close intellectual kinship with Polanyi, could have held that position (Isaac 1984: 14–20). In a widely known paper, Rhoda Halperin (1975) had laid fully bare the Marxian origin of Polanyi's basic ideas, such as economic embeddedness. She was unable to get her interpretation published for another nine years (Halperin 1984), though, because not only Dalton but also the whole surviving Polanyi group were adamantly set against drawing that connection. In the 1990s, Halperin's position was fully vindicated (see, for example, Polanyi-Levitt 1990), but by then Marxism had become a rival third school within economic anthropology. Along with formalism, Marxism claimed a universality of application that substantivism was said to lack. Thus, Dalton's inability or unwillingness to recognise either Polanyi's basic intention, to develop a truly cross-cultural comparative economics by illuminating and critiquing Western economies through the study of ancient and non-Western cases, or his intellectual debt to Karl Marx, contributed to substantivism's demise in economic anthropology.

The Polanyi school today

The Polanyi group was dominant in economic anthropology during the 1960s and 1970s (see Bohannan and Dalton 1962; Dalton 1967a, 1968; Dalton and Köcke 1983; Durrenberger 1998; Halperin and Dow 1977; Helm, Bohannan and Sahlins 1965; Polanyi 1977; Polanyi, Arensberg and Pearson 1957; Sahlins 1960, 1972; Somers 1990). Their influence was notable among anthropological archaeologists and ethnohistorians as well as sociocultural anthropologists during that period: Paul Bohannan, Pedro Carrasco, Louis Dumont, Timothy Earle, Maurice Godelier, Claude Meillassoux, John Murra, Marshall Sahlins and Eric Wolf, among many others. By 1990, however, the substantivists had lost much of their visibility, and Polanyi's work was little cited in anthropology subsequently, for the reasons given above. Nevertheless, some of Polanyi's most basic concepts, especially reciprocity and redistribution, have become anthropological stock in trade. They are, in fact, so firmly entrenched that they are generally unattributed in their present usage. In that sense, the demise of substantivism was more apparent than real. It is probably no exaggeration to say that virtually all present-day anthropological analyses of prehistoric or non-Western economies that self-consciously avoid imposing market (capitalist or microeconomic) concepts and categories are carrying on the Polanyi tradition, even when his work is cited lightly or not at all (see Somers 1990), or even when today's authors do not realise that Polanyi's writings informed their professional preparation.

In assessing Polanyi's legacy, it is important to look beyond anthropology. In the first place, he was an economic historian or political economist, not an anthropologist. Second, his goal was to improve the human condition by overcoming the deleterious precipitates of capitalism (especially fascism and economic depression), not to contribute to the growth of academic disciplines (see Goldfrank 1990). In other words, he used anthropology and classical studies only as vehicles to reach larger ends.

Were he alive today, Polanyi doubtless would be pleased by the diverse group of historians, classicists, economists, political scientists, sociologists, anthropologists and other social thinkers and activists who are using his work as the focus of their conferences (see Duncan and Tandy 1994; McRobbie and Polanyi-Levitt 2000; Mendell and Salée 1991; Polanyi-Levitt 1990). From their collections of papers, it is clear not only that Polanyi's work remains influential but also that its utility is not restricted to 'primitive' or 'archaic' economies. Halperin (1991, 1994b, 1998) employs Polanyi's concept of householding to illuminate resistance to capitalist subsumption among the poor of Cincinnati and its environs, while Lorissa Lomnitz (2000) reveals the great importance of reciprocity in the informal economy of all social classes in present-day Mexico and Chile. Walter Neale (1994) demonstrates the utility of Polanyi's concept of the 'double movement', the emergence of

disembedded capitalism followed by a protective social movement to re-embed some important economic aspects in the political fabric, for understanding Indian modifications of and resistance to British colonial economic policy. In a similar vein, Fred Block (1991) argues that the United States reaped great economic benefits from capitalism in the 1850–1950 period only by maintaining low levels of 'marketness' and relatively high levels of social embeddedness in such important sectors as agriculture, manufacturing and professional services. Other contributors to the edited volumes cited above employ Polanyi's ideas in analysing contemporary Britain, Bulgaria, Germany, Hungary, Japan and Turkey. At a more general level, economist James Ronald Stanfield (1986, 1990; McClintock and Stanfield 1991) is forcefully championing a Polanyi-based comparative economics. Several contributors to the aforementioned collections also tie Polanyi's work to early developments in world-systems theory and welfare state theory, as well as to post-Soviet social policy formation in Eastern Europe.

In short, while Karl Polanyi's influence peaked over twenty years ago in anthropology, it is now building in the other social and policy sciences. 'Polanyi is now coming into his own, perhaps, in the field of social policy' (Somers 1990: 157).

Acknowledgements

I thank Rhoda Halperin for her critique of a draft of this chapter and for her twenty years of collegial support and intellectual stimulation at the University of Cincinnati.

References

Block, F. 1991. Contradictions of self-regulating markets. In *The legacy of Karl Polanyi* (eds) M. Mendell and D. Salée. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Bohannan, P. and G. Dalton (eds) 1962. *Markets in Africa*. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press.

Campbell, T. 1981. *Seven theories of human society*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cancian, F. 1966. Maximization as norm, strategy, and theory: a comment on programmatic statements in economic anthropology. *American Anthropologist* 68: 465–70.

Cook, S. 1966a. The obsolete 'anti-market' mentality: a critique of the substantive approach to economic anthropology. *American Anthropologist* 68: 323–45.

Cook, S. 1966b. Maximization, economic theory, and anthropology: a reply to Cancian. *American Anthropologist* 68: 1494–8.

Cook, S. 1969. The 'anti-market' mentality re-examined: a further critique of the substantive approach to economic anthropology. *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 25: 378–406.

Dalton, G. 1966. 'Bridewealth' vs. 'brideprice'. *American Anthropologist* 68: 732–8.

Dalton, G. (ed.) 1967a. *Tribal and peasant economies: readings in economic anthropology*. Garden City, NY: Natural History Press.

Dalton, G. 1967b. Traditional production in primitive African economies. In *Tribal and peasant economies: readings in economic anthropology* (ed.) G. Dalton. Garden City, NY: Natural History Press.

Dalton, G. 1968. Introduction. In *Primitive, archaic, and modern economies: essays of Karl Polanyi* (ed.) G. Dalton. Boston, Mass.: Beacon.

Dalton, G. 1981. Comment on 'Symposium: economic anthropology and history: the work of Karl Polanyi'. *Research in Economic Anthropology* 3: 69–93.
Dalton, G. 1990. Writings that clarify theoretical disputes over Karl Polanyi's work. In *The life and work of Karl Polanyi* (ed.) K. Polanyi-Levitt. Montreal: Black Rose Books.
Dalton, G. and J. Köcke 1983. The work of the Polanyi group: past, present, and future. In *Economic anthropology: topics and theories* (ed.) S. Ortiz. Lanham, Md.: University Press of America.
Dowling, J.H. 1979. The Goodfellows vs. the Dalton gang: the assumptions of economic anthropology. *Journal of Anthropological Research* 35: 292–308.
Duncan, C.M. and D.W. Tandy (eds) 1994. *From political economy to anthropology: situating economic life in past societies*. Montreal: Black Rose Books.
Durrenberger, E.P. 1998. A shower of rain: Marshall Sahlins's *Stone age economics* twenty-five years later. *Culture & Agriculture* 20 (2/3): 102–6.
Goldfrank, W.L. 1990. Fascism and *The Great Transformation*. In *The life and work of Karl Polanyi* (ed.) K. Polanyi-Levitt. Montreal: Black Rose Books.
Halperin, R.H. 1975. Polanyi and Marx. Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, San Francisco.
Halperin, R.H. 1984. Polanyi, Marx, and the institutional paradigm in economic anthropology. *Research in Economic Anthropology* 6: 245–72.
Halperin, R.H. 1988. *Economies across cultures.* London: Macmillan.
Halperin, R.H. 1991. Karl Polanyi's concept of householding: resistance and livelihood in an Appalachian region. *Research in Economic Anthropology* 13: 93–116.
Halperin, R.H. 1994a. *Cultural economies past and present*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
Halperin, R.H. 1994b. Time and the economy in a northeastern Kentucky region. In *From political economy to anthropology: situating economic life in past societies* (eds) C. Duncan and D. Tandy. Montreal: Black Rose Books.
Halperin, R.H. 1998. *Practicing community*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
Halperin, R.H. and J. Dow (eds) 1977. *Peasant livelihood*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
Helm, J., P. Bohannan and M. Sahlins (eds) 1965. *Essays in economic anthropology, dedicated to the memory of Karl Polanyi*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
Isaac, B.L. 1984. Introduction. *Research in Economic Anthropology* 6: 1–25.
Isaac, B.L. 1993. Retrospective on the formalist–substantivist debate. *Research in Economic Anthropology* 14: 213–33.
Isaac, B.L. 1996. Approaches to Classic Maya economies. *Research in Economic Anthropology* 17: 297–334.
LeClair, E.E., Jr. and H.K. Schneider (eds) 1968. *Economic anthropology: readings in theory and analysis*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Co.
Lomnitz, L.A. 2000. Reciprocity and the informal economy in Latin America. In *Karl Polanyi in Vienna: the contemporary significance of The Great Transformation* (eds) K. McRobbie and K. Polanyi-Levitt. Montreal: Black Rose Books.
Malinowski, B. 1922. *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. London: Routledge.
Malinowski, B. 1935. *Coral gardens and their magic*. New York: American Book Co.
McClintock, B. and J.R. Stanfield 1991. The crisis of the welfare state: lessons from Karl Polanyi. In *The legacy of Karl Polanyi: market, state and society at the end of the twentieth century* (eds) M. Mendell and D. Salée. New York: St. Martin's Press.
McRobbie, K. and K. Polanyi-Levitt (eds) 2000. *Karl Polanyi in Vienna: the contemporary significance of The Great Transformation*. Montreal: Black Rose Books.
Mendell, M. and D. Salée (eds) 1991. *The legacy of Karl Polanyi: market, state and society at the end of the twentieth century*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
Neale, W.C. 1990. Karl Polanyi and American institutionalism: a strange case of convergence. In *The life and work of Karl Polanyi* (ed.) K. Polanyi-Levitt. Montreal: Black Rose Books.
Neale, W.C. 1994. Exposure and protection: the double movement in the economic history of rural India. In *From political economy to anthropology: situating economic life in past societies* (eds) C.M. Duncan and D.W. Tandy. Montreal: Black Rose Books.
Polanyi, K. 1936. The essence of Fascism. In *Christianity and the social revolution* (eds) J. Lewis, K. Polanyi and D. Kitchin. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Polanyi, K. 1944. *The great transformation: the political and economic origins of our time*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
Polanyi, K. 1957. The economy as instituted process. In *Trade and market in the early empires* (eds) K. Polanyi, C. Arensberg and H. Pearson. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press.
Polanyi, K. 1977. *The livelihood of man*. (H.W. Pearson, ed.) New York: Academic Press.
Polanyi, K., C. Arensberg and H. Pearson (eds) 1957. *Trade and market in the early empires*. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press.
Polanyi, K. and A. Rotstein 1966. *Dahomey and the slave trade: an analysis of an archaic economy*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
Polanyi-Levitt, K. (ed.) 1990. *The life and work of Karl Polanyi*. Montreal: Black Rose Books.
Sahlins, M. 1960. Political power and the economy in primitive society. In *Essays in the science of culture* (eds) G. Dole and R. Carneiro. New York: William Y. Crowell Co.
Sahlins, M. 1972. *Stone age economics*. Chicago: Aldine-Atherton, Inc.
Schneider, H.K. 1974. *Economic man*. New York: Free Press.
Service, E. 1987. The bifurcation of method and theory in ethnology. In *Themes in ethnology and culture history: essays in honor of David F. Aberle* (ed.) L. Donald. Meerut, India: Folklore Institute, Archana Publications.
Somers, M.R. 1990. Karl Polanyi's intellectual legacy. In *The life and work of Karl Polanyi* (ed.) K. Polanyi-Levitt. Montreal: Black Rose Books.
Stanfield, J.R. 1986. *The economic thought of Karl Polanyi: lives and livelihood*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
Stanfield, J.R. 1990. Karl Polanyi and contemporary economic thought. In *The life and work of Karl Polanyi* (ed.) K. Polanyi-Levitt. Montreal: Black Rose Books.
Weiner, A.B. 1988. *The Trobrianders of Papua New Guinea*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

2 Anthropology, political economy and world-system theory

J.S. Eades

The relationship between anthropology and political economy goes right back to the beginnings of anthropology in the nineteenth century, with the work of Lewis Henry Morgan, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. However, as is well known, the two traditions rather drifted apart early in the twentieth century. Generally, the 'grand narratives' of evolution were either rejected as speculation or seen as irrelevant to research. There were many reasons for this: the development of fieldwork by Franz Boas, Bronislaw Malinowski and their students; the belief that pre-monetary and pre-industrial economies had their own dynamics and logics which were different from those of the modern capitalist and socialist systems; and the ascendancy of Émile Durkheim, Max Weber and Talcott Parsons as the main sources of structural-functional and modernisation theory.

After the Second World War, the two traditions began to draw together again and grand narratives began to come back into fashion (see Robotham chap. 3 infra). For one thing, there was an increasing overlap in the methods used by anthropologists and historians and in the materials they collected, both in areas where there were relatively few historical records, such as West Africa, and in areas where there was a rich historical tradition, such as Europe and Latin America. Some theoretical traditions such as substantivist economic anthropology also drew extensively on history, particularly the work of Polanyi as interpreted by George Dalton and others (Dalton 1968; Polanyi 1944; Polanyi, Arensberg and Pearson 1957; see Isaac chap. 1 supra). As decolonistion proceeded and the superpowers of the period, the United States and the Soviet Union, were increasingly involved in competition and proxy wars, many societies started to experience increasing social and political instability, and 'modernisation theory' became increasingly unsatisfactory for the analysis of what was going on (Shannon 1989: 6–8). The political radicalisation in America and Europe which the same proxy wars produced resulted in a resurgence of interest in Marx, and debates between proponents of various readings raged in a new generation of radical journals. One of the most important of these was world-system theory as developed by Immanuel Wallerstein (1974), together with Andre Gunder Frank (for example, 1969), Giovanni Arrighi (for example, Arrighi 1994; Arrighi and Silver 1999) and

Samir Amin (for example, Amin 1974, 1997). By the 1980s a modified and generalised version of world-system theory was producing fruitful results at boundaries of anthropology, history and archaeology. World-system theory had become well-established in the historical, anthropological and sociological traditions, as the long list of references given by Chase-Dunn and Hall shows (1997: 256). By the 1990s, world-system theorists were increasingly talking about 'globalisation' as the dominant paradigm, as a new industrial revolution based on information technology began to take shape.

In this chapter, I sketch in the background and some of the main contributions to this increasingly interdisciplinary tradition, in five main sections. The first deals with some of the early contributions to the field; the second outlines the work of Wallerstein; the third and fourth consider extensions of the world-system concept by Frank, Gills, Chase-Dunn, Hall and others. In the fifth section I consider the impact of information technology, as discussed by Castells. Finally I spell out some of the implications of this corpus of work for the definition and practice of anthropology.

Antecedents

After the end of the Second World War, reconstruction in Europe and Japan took off, and the result was a period of relative stability and rapid economic growth, bolstered by the Cold War system and the mutual nuclear deterrence of the Soviet Union and the United States. There were still conflicts, most notably in Korea and Indochina, but generally this was a period of optimism, marked by belief in the possibility of orderly change and in the Western industrialised countries as a model to which the developing nations would gradually approximate. This was enshrined in the modernisation theories of the period, such that of Rostow (1960), with its five stages. This body of literature in turn generated its own body of criticisms (Shannon 1989: 2–11): that there was insufficient interest in conflict, that the conditions which had given rise to industrialisation in Europe and America did not exist in most Third-World societies, and that individualism and materialism were not seen as particularly desirable in many non-Western cultures. In particular, critics of modernisation theory took issue with the assumption that the reason for the lack of development in many areas was their 'traditionalism' rather than their historical relations with, and exploitation by, the wealthier countries.

As these criticisms were taken on board, theories that took into account the world-system, or something like it, began to take shape. It was argued that social change could only be explained by theories that were historically grounded and could take into account different contexts of industrialisation, relations between societies (especially between rich and poor) and processes of conflict and exploitation. The emerging theories drew on Marx's accounts

of the capitalist system and Lenin's (1939) accounts of imperialism, trade and colonial exploitation. Exploitation therefore also became a key issue (Shannon 1989: 13). A number of ideas were also adopted from Fernand Braudel (1981–84): the idea of an international system consisting of a dominant 'centre' and a weak periphery, and a cyclical view of history with the rise and fall of states. These kinds of ideas were most notably developed by Frank (1966, 1969) and Wallerstein (1974), together with a number of like-minded anthropologists and historians such as Eric Wolf (1971, 1982), Peter Worsley (1984, 1987) and Paul Kennedy (1989).

The use of centre–periphery and metropolis–satellite relations in the analysis of regional economies was popularised by Frank's work on Latin America (Frank 1969). His explanation of relations of dependency centred on the exploitative relationship between the rich and the poor countries, with the poor countries acting as sources of raw materials for the rich, and also as markets for the manufactured goods produced at the centre. Investment in infrastructure and production in the poorer countries was geared to the needs of the richer countries, making balanced economic growth and improved conditions in the periphery impossible, as most of the profits of trade and production went to international capital rather than local people. The result was the 'development of underdevelopment' (Frank 1966): underdeveloped economies were not just those which had not developed, but those in which the relations of production had been distorted by involvement in international trade. The logical conclusion was that, if involvement in international trade by the weaker countries of the periphery results in exploitation and underdevelopment, the best thing to do is to withdraw from international trade and attempt to develop self-sufficiency. Frank himself noted that the most rapid growth took place in Latin America in periods when relations with the United States were disrupted (Frank 1969: 325–6). The dependency approach was taken up and extended to the study of other regions, most notably in the work of Walter Rodney (1967) and Amin (1973) on Africa. However, it was soon noted that some economic development was taking place in colonies or former colonies in other parts of the world, and so theoretical revision was required (Worsley 1987: 77–8; compare Warren 1980).

Wallerstein and the world-system

Hot on the heels of dependency theory, world-system theory began to enter the theoretical vocabulary, popularised by Wallerstein in his three-volume work *The modern world-system* (1974, 1980, 1989) and in numerous essays (for example, Wallerstein 1975, 1979, 1983, 1984, 1991, 1995, 2000, 2001). Once again there was a period of intense theoretical debate, but by the late 1980s many of the main features of world-system theory had been generally agreed (for a synthesis, see Shannon 1989: chaps 2, 4).

1. The world-system arose as the different regions of the world became linked through exchange and trade into a single economic system with a distinctive division of labour between core and peripheral areas.
2. The system is based on capitalist exploitation: the appropriation of surplus value through the exploitation of the labour of the poor by the rich.
3. Individual parts of the system cannot be analysed in isolation from the others, but only in relation to the whole.
4. The world-system is an inter-state system: the world is divided into nation-states which vary widely in size and wealth, and which compete with one another for power and wealth within the capitalist system.
5. Zones within the world-system can be divided into 'core', 'semi-peripheral' and 'peripheral' regions. The core consists of the most technologically advanced and powerful states. These rise and fall over time, so that the core moves over time. Since the start of international maritime trade in Europe, the core has been centred on Spain and Portugal, followed by Holland and England, and more recently by the United States. The states in the periphery are poorer, less advanced technologically, and their economies are often based on the export of raw materials. In between the core and the periphery lies the semi-periphery. This consists of states which are poor relative to the core but which are capable of making the transition to core status if the conditions are right. This may come about through the use of their low-wage advantage to take over some forms of production from the core countries, thus generating economic growth. The usual pattern in world-system theory is not for the most advanced states to continue to develop, but rather for them to be overtaken by new arrivals that find it easier to adopt the latest technology.
6. The concept of social class takes on a new meaning in world-system theory as classes are seen as transcending national borders, to become world-wide strata. They include not only capitalists and proletarians, but also petty commodity producers and a middle class of skilled and professional workers. In some cases different forms of production may exist in the same household. For instance, wage earners whose wages do not cover their living costs may have to supplement their incomes through various forms of petty commodity production. These workers have been described as 'semi-proletarian' and 'super-exploited': wages can be kept low because part of the cost of reproducing the household is met through non-wage labour economic activities (see Harris chap. 26 infra). Much of the debate about the 'informal sector' of the economy in the 1970s and 1980s revolved around the status and role of these non-wage forms of production within the capitalist system.

7. The global class system is also cross-cut by status groups whose unity is based on culture, including nations. Nationalism is seen as a major factor preventing members of the same social classes from uniting across international boundaries.
8. Political relations with the periphery can involve various forms of domination, ranging from seizure and colonial occupation to the establishment of networks of client states by a major power, as during the Cold War. Semi-peripheral states may therefore be co-opted as regional allies of the major powers.
9. Even though the interests of the state and the national capitalist class may not be identical, they are often symbiotic. The capitalist class provides the resources on which the state depends, while the state performs a number of important roles for the capitalist class: control of the workers, foreign relations initiatives in support of local businesses and opening up new areas for exploitation as part of the periphery.
10. In the core areas, states have acquired legitimacy by allowing workers political rights and bargaining powers, concessions made possible by the inflow of resources from the periphery. On the other hand, continued exploitation of the periphery tends to result in protest and instability, and in the growth of repressive and authoritarian states.

Eurocentrism or the centrality of Asia?

In this early phase, the world-system being discussed was explicitly the *European* world-system. Typical accounts from this period start with a description of the status quo in the fifteenth century on the eve of European expansion, followed by the development of Western maritime trade and colonialism (Wolf 1982: 24–72; compare Kennedy 1989: 1–38; Shannon 1989: 38–43). The orthodox view, following Wallerstein, is that the modern world-system was born in the 'long' sixteenth century, that is to say between about 1450 and 1620, in response to a crisis in the feudal system. This crisis was partly solved by geographical expansion in search of new sources of raw materials; long-distance trade, which created a new division of labour based on the distinction among core, periphery and semi-periphery; and by the development of the modern nation-states in Europe as the basis of economic and political competition. Even though the populations of some European states such as Portugal and Holland were very small during the early period, they were able to gain control of trade routes and territory through a combination of guns and ships, and to set up colonial maritime empires. In this tradition, the world-system is seen as a European creation, with other regions playing the passive roles of old empires in decline or victims of Western colonialism.

Recently, Frank has attempted to counter what he sees as the Eurocentrism

in these accounts in his book, *ReOrient* (Frank 1998). In this, he argues that Europe occupied a fairly peripheral role in the world economy until much later than is generally supposed. This argument grew out of Frank's earlier work with Gills (Frank and Gills 1993), in which they propose that the evolution of the world-system has been taking place over the last 5000 rather than the last 500 years. The global economy was dominated by Asia until around 1800, and might well be so again, with the rise of the East Asian economies in the late twentieth century and with the emergence of China as a potential economic superpower (compare Overholt 1993).

In Frank's account, the destinies of Europe and Asia have been linked in other unexpected ways. Columbus sailed across the Atlantic trying to get to India, after Iberian trade with Asia through the Mediterranean was blocked by Genoa (Frank 1998: 57–8). The Europeans not only traded in goods but also in pathogens, as in the Black Death (Frank 1998: 56–7; compare Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997: 183), while 95 per cent of the population of the Americas was wiped out by diseases brought from Europe (Frank 1998: 59; compare Wolf 1982: 133–5). But the New World contributed maize and potatoes to the world economy, allowing increased production in China and a rise in population there. The Americas also contributed massive new flows of silver to the world-system of trade (Frank 1998: 143–9; compare Wolf 1982: 138–40), as one of the few commodities that the Chinese were willing to buy. The irony of European maritime ascendancy was that the Chinese had long had the best and largest ships, with the biggest fleets in the world, but exploration of the rest of the world was phased out in the mid-fifteenth century (compare Kennedy 1989: 6–8), just as Europe was starting to expand. Fear of the Mongols to the north became the main preoccupation of the Chinese, so that the capital was moved to Beijing and the Great Wall was reinforced. But the imbalance between Asia and Europe remained: at the end of the eighteenth century, Asia still had 66 per cent of the world's population and was responsible for 80 per cent of world production (Frank 1998: 172).

But if the Asian economy was always so powerful, why did the industrial revolution take place in Europe and America and how did the West win the struggle for economic dominance? Kennedy (1989) puts forward a military theory: the cost of defending large empires becomes so prohibitive that they must eventually collapse. Kennedy also argues that the reason why Europe started to develop in the first place was because the states were so weak that they could not control technological innovation or capital accumulation (Kennedy 1989: chap. 1). Frank, on the other hand, suggests a complex model based on a combination of demographic, micro- and macroeconomic factors (Frank 1998: chap. 6), the main features of which can be summarised as follows. The long period of prosperity in Asia that began in 1400 gave way to decline in the eighteenth century, starting with Bengal but also affecting the

Ottoman and Chinese empires. The growth in population during the years of prosperity left a labour surplus when the decline set in, reducing the incentives for technical innovations in agriculture. Meanwhile, the start of the colonial period and European exploitation of the economies of the East made Europe more prosperous, while migration to the new colonies of settlement in the Americas and Australasia kept wages high in Europe. This made technological innovation more cost-effective than it was in Asia, and Western technology (including military technology) started to overtake that of other regions. Generally this is another illustration of the way in which late arrivals in economic development are able to absorb the latest technology and leap-frog the established leaders.

Extending world-system analysis

The work of Frank and Gills (1993) on the date of the origins of the world-system, mentioned above, has led to other interesting possibilities for world-systems analysis. If the world-system developed long before the capitalist period, then pre-capitalist and non-capitalist world-systems are also theoretically possible. Frank and Gills's own analysis was historical, tracing the origins of the modern world-system back to ancient Mesopotamia, via the civilisations of Mediterranean Europe. But another possibility for the use of the world-system concept is to refine it as an ideal type for use in comparative analysis, and this has been carried out most systematically in the work of Chase-Dunn and Hall during the 1980s and 1990s. They define their core concept in the following way:

> We define *world-systems* as intersocietal networks that are systemic … [that is] they exhibit patterned structural reproduction and development. We contend that the developmental logics of world-systems are not all the same, though they do share some general properties … We envision a sequence of changes in which thousands of very small-scale world-systems merged into larger systems, which eventually merged to become the global modern world-system … How and why did these many small systems coalesce and transform over many millennia into a single, global world-system? (Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997: 4–5; original emphasis)

This brings out well three propositions that are central to their work. First, world-systems are intersocietal; that is, they link together societies. This derives from the old political-economy critique of modernisation theory, that societies cannot be studied in isolation from one another. Second, they are systemic, sharing general properties of development. Third, over time many world-systems have merged together, finally creating the single integrated capitalist world-system that we see today.

Chase-Dunn and Hall offer other variations on the world-system theme. Unlike many authors, they do not take core–periphery relationships for

granted, but as something to be investigated in each case. In their view, a world-system could theoretically consist of a network of partners of equal status (1997: 28). They also spell out the different kinds of networks through which societies are connected with one another, based on flows of information, prestige goods, power, basic foodstuffs and raw materials. The largest networks are usually those within which information flows, followed by those in which prestige goods are exchanged. Next in size are what they call 'political/military networks' (PMNs), forming political units, while 'basic goods networks' based on the exchange of foods and raw materials tend to be smaller still.

How does evolution take place in the world-system? In Chase-Dunn and Hall's analysis (1997: 249), this is a result of three linked processes: 'semi-peripheral development', 'iterations of population pressure and hierarchy formation', and 'transformations of modes of accumulation'. Like other world-system theorists, they argue that many of the most dynamic and interesting innovations and developments take place in the semi-periphery, enabling semi-peripheral societies to overtake societies in the core, creating a leap-frogging effect. Many of these developments are influenced by population dynamics, with population growth and increasing social complexity being followed by dramatic decline due to warfare or the arrival of pathogens from outside.

The key dynamic for the evolution of world-systems, however, lies not in modes of *production* as in orthodox Marxist theory, but in modes of *accumulation*, defined as 'the deep structural logic of production, distribution, exchange and accumulation' (1997: 29). Chase-Dunn and Hall (1997: 30) distinguish four modes of accumulation: kinship modes, 'based on consensual definitions of value, obligations, affective ties, kinship networks, and rules of conduct'; tributary modes, based on political (including legal and military) coercion; capitalist modes, based on the production of commodities; and socialist modes (which they describe as 'hypothetical'), that is, democratic systems of distribution based on collective rationality. Different modes can co-exist within the same system, and there are also transitional and mixed systems. The final concept they use to tie all this together is that of *incorporation*, the process through which separate systems become linked (1997: 59). The nature of this process changes with the mode of accumulation (1997: 249).

This leads to a typology of world-systems based on the mode of accumulation, which incorporates many of the classic categories of earlier anthropology (Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997: 42–4):

I. Kin-based mode dominant
   A. Stateless, classless

1. Sedentary foragers, horticulturists, pastoralists
2. Big-man systems

B. Chiefdoms (classes but not states)

II. Tributary modes dominant (states, cities)
   A. Primary state-based world-systems (Mesopotamia, Egypt, Indus Valley, Ganges Valley, China, pre-Columbian Mexico and Peru)
   B. Primary empires in which a number of previously autonomous states have been unified by conquest (Agade, Old Kingdom Egypt, Magahda, Chou, Teotihuacan, Huari)
   C. Multicentred world-systems composed of empires, states and peripheral regions (Near East, India, China, Mesoamerica, Peru)
   D. Commercialising state-based world-systems in which important aspects of commodification have developed but the system is still dominated by the logic of the tributary modes (Afroeurasian world-system, including Roman, Indian, and Chinese core regions)

III. Capitalist mode dominant
   A. The Europe-centred sub-system since the seventeenth century
   B. The global modern world-system

Chase-Dunn and Hall emphasise that they are not putting forward a unilinear theory of evolution: transformations have been similar across regions only in a broad sense, and development has always been uneven. What they attempt to do is specify the kinds of organisation and production that are necessary to allow this uneven development to take place. They are therefore interested not only in technology, ecology and demography, but also 'those social institutions that facilitate consensus, legitimate power, and structure competition and conflict within and between societies' (Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997: 5). Typically it is not the most developed societies now that are most likely to develop fastest in the future: the 'leading edge' of social complexity is constantly moving as societies leap-frog one another to take over the lead, as happened in the case of Europe overtaking Asia.

Political economy, culture and the information age

The most recent 'grand narrative' to provide a framework for explaining the political economy of the modern world is that of Castells in his three-volume work, *The information age* (1996, 1997, 1999). This work traces the impact of information technology on the world economy and social structure. It brings together a number of Castells's earlier interests, including the role of the state in consumption (compare Castells 1977), social movements (Castells 1983) and the relationship between information technology and urban development (Castells 1989; Castells and Hall 1994). It also shows how the new technology is leading to a process of polarisation between the rich and the poor, as well as

to the erosion of the nation-state and the internationalisation of organised crime. A large part of the third volume deals with regional polarisation between a 'fourth world', consisting of much of Africa and the former Soviet Union, and the major growth poles of Europe, North America and East Asia (Castells 1999: chaps 2, 4).

One of Castells's main starting points is 'the space of flows' (Castells 1989: chap. 3, compare 1996: chap. 6). In his view, 'space' has often been used historically to define places in which power, capital, people and so forth have been concentrated, such as major cities. However, the new information technology means that people working together in some kinds of work no longer have to be in the same place.

Second, post-industrial societies are moving from industrialism to *informationalism*, the 'informational mode', which now operates together with the capitalist mode of production. Their economies are not based on services so much as information processing as the basis of production, distribution, consumption and management. Collective consumption organised by the state, and private consumption organised through the market, also involve the increasing use of information and information technology.

The new technology has to be produced somewhere, and in the United States the electronics and software industries are concentrated in a small number of regions located around San Francisco, Los Angeles, Phoenix, Dallas-Fort Worth, New York, Boston and Philadelphia (Castells 1989). Their location generally depends on the location of the top universities. Historically, Stanford was particularly important as the institution which gave rise to the development of Silicon Valley (Castells 1996: 53–60).

Once these areas develop as high-tech centres, a number of other social processes happen. Land and house prices rise, the middle classes involved in these industries move in, and the working class moves out. They form what have been called 'edge cities' (Garreau 1991) on the edges of the traditional large urban centres, and people with money prefer to move there because they are more convenient and much safer than the larger American cities, with their problems of crime, violence and poor public education. High-class recreation and retail facilities to cater to these groups also move in, but these employ a completely different group of people: low-skilled, low-paid workers in service industries, with heavy concentrations of women and ethnic-minority workers. The result is the 'dual city' (Mollenkopf and Castells 1991), with its increasing division between the rich and the poor, as the middle class of skilled workers and clerical workers increasingly disappears. There has also been a shift in state funding from what Castells calls the 'urban welfare state' to the 'suburban warfare state' (1989: chap. 5). Much of the traditional state funding of education, health and welfare in large cities like New York has been cut back, while big defence contracts have led to an economic boom in the

edge-city suburbs where the high-tech industries are located. Finally, of course, many of the traditional industrial jobs are moving overseas as the large companies look for cheaper labour markets outside the United States, Europe and Japan, in other words to the semi-periphery.

The effects of information technology have been to speed up the processes of globalisation in the world economy. After the Second World War, the costs of research and development very quickly led to the development of multinational corporations, and with the decreasing cost of transmitting information these have been able to organise their research and production on a global rather than a national or even a regional basis. Three interdependent core areas of the world economy have emerged: North America, Europe and East Asia. The rise of information technology is also linked to the development of a global currency market, based in the three world cities of London, New York and Tokyo, and the rise of financial services industries, which are based there as well (compare Sassen 1991).

Deregulation of the currency markets means that capital can be transferred anywhere in the world electronically, and there is a vast subsidiary industry of people making money through betting on future currency movements. The result has been to amplify instability in world markets, and of course to marginalise even further the areas and people outside the reach of this new technology. And it is the corporations that have flexibility and are able to adapt quickly that have been particularly successful in this kind of environment.

The East Asian corporations were particularly well placed to take advantage of this new technology (Castells 1999: chap. 4) because of the nature of the links between them. The Japanese industries were organised around the *keiretsu*, networks of companies both big and small, with one or other of the large banks at the centre. Along with the growth of the giant corporations has gone the 'small is beautiful' philosophy, and Japan combines the two ideas, with huge companies sitting at the top of a hierarchy of small family businesses. The Chinese businesses in East Asia are linked together in a similar way through family ties, which give flexibility in terms of flows of capital, loans, information and so on. But the network enterprise is also marked by flexibility of employment, the collapse of traditional work patterns in many cases and the massive influx of women into the labour market, often at lower rates of pay than their male counterparts. In the UK this took place during the Thatcher period of the 1980s, and in Japan it still seems to be taking place in the present.

In the second volume of *The information age*, *The power of identity*, Castells looks at some of the social impacts of these changes. The shift of power in the work place, the breakdown of traditional patterns of employment and the gender division of labour have produced a crisis in the family

(Castells 1997: chap. 4). 'Normal' families with husband, wife and their children living together have now become the minority rather than the norm, thanks to the increasing divorce rate, and alternative lifestyles. Part of the response to these changes has been religious, with the rise of fundamentalist versions of Christianity and Islam stressing the importance of patriarchy (Castells 1997: 12–27). Resistance to the new global order has resulted in the flowering of a diversity of cults and social movements, from fringe cults such as AUM Shinrikyo in Japan (Castells 1997: 97–104) to various types of environmental movement, from the local to the global (Castells 1997: chap. 3).

Finally, of course, the state itself has been weakened by these processes of globalisation (Castells 1997: chaps 5, 6). Increasingly states are unable to stop flows of capital or information, or to prevent the major corporations from moving industrial production to other regions of the world. Democratic processes in countries such as the United States have been profoundly influenced by television, the main concern of which is to sell advertising space. As a result, intellectual content is reduced, and a sex-and-scandal approach to politics reduces it to the level of soap opera. Castells argues that the collapse of the Soviet Union was also partly due to the increasing gap in information technology, as the Soviets failed to develop their own IT industry (Castells 1999: chap. 1). The country became increasingly dependent on increasingly obsolete systems borrowed or pirated from the West, and even photocopying and typewriter facilities were tightly controlled for political reasons.

In the aftermath of the Soviet Union's collapse, organised crime has flourished, organised partly by former party officials, especially in the republics of the Caucasus and Central Asia. One of the features of organised crime world-wide is the increasing integration of the various regional mafias which control it, and the amounts of money in circulation are staggering (Castells 1999: chap. 3). Many of the profits are based on the continuing criminalisation of drug taking in the United States, which keeps the prices of drugs, and therefore the profits to organised crime, artificially high. Much of the attraction of criminal activity lies in the fact that there are few alternative sources of income for many people, especially in what Castells calls the 'fourth world' (Castells 1999: chap. 2), which are defined as regions and peoples excluded for one reason or another from the new information economy. It includes whole regions, such as sub-Saharan Africa, where the increasing struggle for survival has led to the collapse of economies and regimes and an upsurge in inter-ethnic violence, resulting in almost perpetual civil war in states such as Liberia, Sierra Leone, Zaire, Somalia, Rwanda and Burundi. But it also includes the excluded minorities in the core industrial countries, especially in the urban ghettos of the United States, where the

imprisonment of a large proportion of young minority males for often fairly petty criminal offences is a major cause of family poverty.

In the last thirty years, studies of business and industry, ethnic minorities, housing problems, poverty, deviance, international migration and the sex industry have all multiplied, creating the need for new grand narratives to tie these all together. This is where Castells's work, together with that of the other major theorists working in the political-economy tradition, is perhaps most important, for it provides not only a framework for understanding the core processes in modern society, but also offers a critique of the direction in which it is going. Like Chase-Dunn and Hall, his conclusions about the future are pretty bleak (Castells 1999: conclusion; compare Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997: chap. 11), but at least understanding the underlying processes provides the hope of solutions for the problems of humanity in the present century, even though the current logic of the mode of accumulation hardly suggests optimism.

Conclusions

The study of political economy and the world-system has largely taken place on the fringes of anthropology, and has largely been interdisciplinary. Although it has involved historically-minded anthropologists such as Wolf and Worsley, the other main protagonists have been from sociology, history and economics, such as Frank, Wallerstein and Castells. In all this work, however, there is a sense that traditional disciplinary boundaries are irrelevant, and all of these authors have drawn freely on similarly vast bodies of research from across history and the social sciences. For anthropology as a discipline, the main significance of this work can perhaps be summarised under the following points.

First, with the move of anthropological research into complex urban societies and the capitalist economy, there has been an increasing need to bring back grand narratives to provide a macro-level framework for understanding the grassroots reality that most anthropologists actually study. The work within the political-economy tradition described above has provided the best tools to date for constructing this kind of framework, and has been indispensable in helping to understand the modern world and its evolution.

Second, in the study of small-scale societies, world-system theory can play an important role by focusing on the relationships between societies, allowing a critique of much of the earlier work in anthropology, in which societies and cultures tended to be treated as discrete entities isolated from each other. As shown above, outside links can often produce dramatic results within societies, particularly if they involve the spread of pathogens, which have in some instances led to catastrophic population decline.

Third, world-system theory is particularly fruitful in American

anthropology, given the strong links between anthropology and archaeology. As Chase-Dunn and Hall have shown (1997: chap. 7), these models can be usefully applied even in the study of small-scale social groups for which the only evidence is historical and archaeological.

Fourth, world-system theory is an important tool in the development of a scientific anthropology, as it suggests models which can be tested statistically using a variety of data, from material remains to field surveys and questionnaires.

Finally, because it deals with processes and trends rather than states, world-system theory provides interesting possibilities for developing scenarios for the future of social groups at all levels, from individual households through to the world population as a whole. Some of these scenarios may be exceptionally bleak, but one thing that world-system theory does teach us is that human history has been exceptionally messy at certain times in the past, and presumably will be so again in the future. Thus it provides a useful antidote to some of the more optimistic versions of social theory in allowing us to forecast what is likely to happen if current trends continue, and in reminding us that at the world-system level, exploitation, conflict and catastrophe are, statistically speaking, normal aspects of the human condition.

References

Amin, S. 1973. *Neocolonialism in West Africa*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Amin, S. 1974. *Accumulation on a world scale: a critique of the theory of underdevelopment*. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Amin, S. 1997. *Capitalism in the age of globalization*. London: Zed Books.

Arrighi, G. 1994. *The long twentieth century: money, power and the origins of our times*. London: Verso.

Arrighi, G. and B.J. Silver 1999. *Chaos and governance in the world system*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Braudel, F. 1981–84. *Civilization and capitalism: 15th–18th centuries*. (3 vols) New York: Harper & Row.

Castells, M. 1977. *The urban question: a Marxist approach*. London: Edward Arnold.

Castells, M. 1983. *The city and the grassroots: a cross-cultural theory of urban social movements*. London: Edward Arnold.

Castells, M. 1989. *The informational city: information technology, economic restructuring and the urban–regional process*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Castells, M. 1996. *The information age: economy, society and culture, volume I. The rise of the network society*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Castells, M. 1997. *The information age: economy, society and culture, volume II. The power of identity*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Castells, M. 1999. *The information age: economy, society and culture, volume III. End of millennium*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Castells, M. and P. Hall 1994. *Technopoles of the world: the marking of 21st century industrial complexes*. London: Routledge.

Chase-Dunn, C. and T.D. Hall 1997. *Rise and demise: comparing world-systems*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press.

Dalton, G. (ed.) 1968. *Primitive, archaic and modern economies: essays of Karl Polanyi*. Boston, Mass.: Beacon.

Frank, A.G. 1966. The development of underdevelopment. *Monthly Review* 18: 17–31.

Frank, A.G. 1969. *Capitalism and underdevelopment in Latin America.* Harmondsworth: Pelican Books.
Frank, A.G. 1998. *ReOrient: global economy in the Asian age*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Frank, A.G. and B.K. Gills (eds) 1993. *The world system: five hundred years or five thousand?* London: Routledge.
Garreau, J. 1991. *Edge city: life on the new frontier*. New York: Doubleday.
Kennedy, P. 1989. *The rise and fall of great powers: economic change and military conflict from 1500 to 2000*. London: Fontana.
Lenin, V.I. 1939. *Imperialism, the highest state of capitalism*. New York: International Publishers.
Mollenkopf, J.H. and M. Castells (eds) 1991. *Dual city: restructuring New York*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
Overholt, W.H. 1993. *China: the next economic superpower*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson.
Polanyi, K. 1944. *The great transformation: the political and economic origins of our time*. Boston, Mass.: Beacon.
Polanyi, K., C.M. Arensberg and H.W. Pearson (eds) 1957. *Trade and market in the early empires*. Chicago: Regnery.
Rodney, W. 1967. *How Europe underdeveloped Africa*. London: Bogle l'Ouverture.
Rostow, W.W. 1960. *The stages of economic growth: a non-communist manifesto*. London: Cambridge University Press.
Sassen, S. 1991. *The global city: New York, London, Tokyo*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Shannon, T.R. 1989. *An introduction to the world-system perspective.* Boulder, Colo.: Westview.
Wallerstein, I. 1974. *The modern world-system I: capitalist agriculture and the origins of the European world-economy in the sixteenth century*. New York: Academic Press.
Wallerstein, I. (ed.) 1975. *World inequality*. Montreal: Black Rose.
Wallerstein, I. 1979. *The capitalist world-economy: essays by Immanuel Wallerstein.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Wallerstein, I. 1980. *The modern world-system II: mercantilism and the consolidation of the European world-economy, 1600–1750.* New York: Academic Press.
Wallerstein, I. 1983. *Historical capitalism*. London, Verso.
Wallerstein, I. 1984. *The politics of the world-economy: the states, the movements and the civilizations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Wallerstein, I. 1989. *The modern world-system III: the second era of great expansion of the capitalist world-economy, 1730–1840s.* San Diego: Academic Press.
Wallerstein, I. 1991. *Geopolitics and geoculture: essays on the changing world system*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Wallerstein, I. 1995. *After liberalism.* New York: New Press.
Wallerstein, I. 2000. *The essential Wallerstein.* New York: New Press.
Wallerstein, I. 2001. *Unthinking social science: the limits of nineteenth-century paradigms.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
Warren, B. 1980. *Imperialism: pioneer of capitalism.* New York: New Left Books.
Wolf, E.R. 1971. *Peasant wars of the twentieth century*. London: Faber & Faber.
Wolf, E.R. 1982. *Europe and the people without history*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Worsley, P. 1984. *The three worlds: culture and world development*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson.
Worsley, P. 1987. Development. In *The new 'Introducing sociology'* (ed.) P. Worsley. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

3 Political economy

Don Robotham

Political economy is characterised by an analytical approach which treats the economy from the point of view of production rather than from that of distribution, exchange, consumption or the market. It does not ignore distribution and exchange but analyses these in relation to the role they play in the production of the material needs of a society, including the need to reproduce and expand the means of production themselves (Dupré and Rey 1978). The field is a vast one and contains many disputes. This chapter will address some of the central themes that arise within the political economy tradition. These themes will be pursued in general and by discussing their representation in the works of well-known anthropologists.

The emphasis in this chapter is on the relationship of political economy to economic anthropology. At the same time it is important to recognise that political economy presents itself as a general theory of society, inequality, politics and culture. Some of the most significant work in political economy has been done in relationship to politics, for example the very important work of the late Eric Wolf (1999). Likewise, it is difficult to understand many of the current approaches to gender inequality in anthropology unless one understands the basis of this in theories of political economy. Here debates around the earlier work of Lisette Josephides, which explains the inequality of women in Melanesia as deriving from the exploitation of women in the production process, have played critical roles (Josephides 1985; Strathern 1988).

From the point of view of economics, the central concept in political economy is that of the 'mode of production'. This focus on production is in sharp contrast to various forms of exchange theory, which characterised the work of both the formalist and substantivist schools of economic anthropology (see Isaac chap. 1 supra) and which continues unabated in recent work on anthropological theories of value (Graeber 2001; see Graeber chap. 27 infra). The political economy approach is also part of a broad Enlightenment metanarrative of progress. At its core this is the question of the nature and significance of history in general and economic history in particular. Analyses of particular societies are placed within a broader schema of social evolution that strongly affects the specific study (Godelier 1978: 216–17). Critical issues which continue to preoccupy anthropologists are the significance of the non-Western economic experience in its own right and from the point of view of

Western and world economic history, the related issues of Third-World development and of economic alternatives to globalisation. These issues are addressed in political economy from a distinctive point of view.

One should note that here I am writing of political economy in the Marxist sense. This tradition of economic anthropology derives from the works of Georg Hegel, and from the critique of British political economy in the work of Karl Marx and of Friedrich Engels. However, there is a vibrant version of political economy which is the application of rational choice theory to political decision making at the collective level in both developed and underdeveloped economies. Practitioners of such brands of political economy, ultimately deriving from the work of Adam Smith, exist in anthropology (Bates 1987). This microeconomic political economy is not the subject matter of this chapter.

The discussion begins with the themes raised in the work of the most influential group of political economists in the field of anthropology to date; the French structural Marxists, also known as the 'articulation' school. This trend arose in the late 1960s and exerted a major influence on economic anthropology and anthropology in general through the entire decade of the 1970s. Here the critical representatives were Claude Meillassoux, Maurice Godelier, Emmanuel Terray, Pierre-Phillipe Rey, Georges Dupré, Marc Auge as well as historians of Africa – Jean Suret-Canale and Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch – with whom they worked closely (Seddon 1978). Today all of these anthropologists have abandoned or substantially modified their theoretical outlook with the consequence that this once highly influential school of economic anthropologists is now largely defunct. Where their influence is still strongly felt is in South African anthropology and social science, where structural Marxism was one of the inspirations leading to the efflorescence of neo-Marxist political economy (Asad and Wolpe 1976).

Structural Marxism was primarily an Africanist school, except for Godelier whose speciality is Melanesia. Their work was characterised in particular by a detailed empirical knowledge of the societies of West and Central Africa and Madagascar, which had been a part of the French African colonial empire. This was by no means the first application of a Marxist-influenced political economy in anthropology. The work of Godfrey Wilson and of Ronald Frankenberg, strongly influenced by the more processual functionalism of Max Gluckman, preceded that of the French by decades (Frankenberg 1978; Wilson 1939).

This group of early British political economists was not theoretically oriented. They were primarily interested in analysing and documenting empirically the impact of British colonialism: the transformation of land tenure relations; the effects of copper mining in Zambia and of diamond and gold mining in South Africa; the breakdown of 'tribal cohesion' in the

economies and societies of Central and Southern Africa; the rise of large-scale labour migration, forced or otherwise, leading to urbanisation and 'detribalisation'. Their work in the application of political economy in anthropology, economics and history was pioneering. It provided an invaluable account of the dire economic and social impact of colonialism in the inter-war and early post-war years.

What was distinctive of the French school, however, was the combination of traditional ethnographic empiricism with a self-consciously theoretical orientation. Strongly influenced by the structuralism of Claude Lévi-Strauss and the highly abstract structural Marxism of Althusser and Balibar, their intervention was aimed at having a far-reaching impact on anthropological theory in general (Althusser and Balibar 1998). Whereas previous Marxist theoretical interventions tended to distort anthropological knowledge in order to force it into a preconceived schema, their approach was different. Their aim was to use fieldwork as a necessary point of departure for theory. They insisted on a detailed, fine-grained analysis of the economic, political and kinship relationships revealed in their data. On this basis, they approached theory as a construct that should respect and be supported by the data. Part of their influence on economic anthropology was due to this derivation of theory from the familiar fieldwork ethnography long characteristic of anthropology.

As a result of this approach, the French school raised fundamental challenges pertaining to the entire endeavour of economic anthropology. What were the relations of production characteristic of kinship societies? Did exploitation exist within them? What was the connection among production, exchange and the development of markets? How were the main concepts, in particular the central one of 'mode of production', to be understood and applied? What was the source of value in such economies and what was the relevance to other concepts of value in economic theory? How were such economies to be understood in the broad sweep of human history? Could the orthodox metanarrative of progress that had always characterised Marxist political economy satisfactorily resolve such issues?

Modes of production

The emphasis on production leads to the master concept of this tradition, 'mode of production'. The mode of production is understood to be made up of a particular arrangement of the 'relations of production' and a corresponding level of the 'forces of production'. Relations of production have above all to do with control of the 'means of production'. From this point of view, the key to understanding any economy and society, is to understand who (that is, which strata or classes) controls the means of production, by which every society makes provisions for its material existence and continuity.

The concept 'relations of production' is also central. It is the defining criterion for distinguishing one mode of production from the other. Thus the 'Ancient Slave mode of production' was characterised by unique relationships to the means of production. This is an economic system in which a particular social class not only owns the main means of production privately, that is, the land, this class also owns the human beings who work the land. Or, to put it from the point of view of the people who do the work, their relationship to the means of production is one in which they are both deprived of the means and are themselves the property of the dominant slave-holding class.

The other major concept is that of 'forces of production', of which the 'means of production' are a part. Means of production include the 'objects of labour', such as land and raw materials, and the 'means' or 'instruments' of labour: tools and technology. However, the most important 'force of production' is neither instrument nor object of labour. It is 'human labour power' itself, the chief 'force of production'. In other words, integral to the political economy approach is a labour theory of value. Central also is the political, indeed philosophical, conclusion drawn from this idea: namely that, human labour and thus 'the working people' are necessarily the motor of human history. It is here that the character of political economy as a labour theory of value and a theory of exploitation is revealed. For once class-divided economies emerge, each mode of production has a characteristic form of the extraction of surplus. Indeed, it is the very growth of an economy which has the capacity to produce a regular surplus that leads to class division, the transformation of kinship-dominated economies into 'political' societies and to the rise of the state.

The concept of forces of production is not to be confused with or collapsed into the concept of technology. Technology is a human creation and is always applied in association with some form of human labour, even if this increasingly is 'mental labour'. It is only one of the forces of production. In so far as technology achieves a relative autonomy this is only because the division of labour has been developed to a high level. Political economy, although attaching great importance to technology, does not offer a technological explanation of the economy. Likewise, this viewpoint differs substantially from the view sometimes characterised as 'ecological' anthropology. This ecological view has had an important influence on the work of political economists such as Frankenberg and Wolf (Frankenberg 1978; Wolf 1999). Geography and climate have an effect on economic processes, but these operate only through human productive activity within a specific set of production relations. Human labour power by brawn or brain thus is reaffirmed as the chief force of production, its political expression is in class struggle, and it is retained as the motor of human history.

The practical application of this ensemble of concepts is best understood in

relationship to specific modes of production. In the kinship-dominated societies frequently studied by anthropologists, the means of production are communally owned. Tools are usually privately held but ownership of the chief means of production – the land, rivers or lakes – is vested in the kin group. Elders exercise control not in their own right but on behalf of the group. Division of labour is by sex and age, which in general gives seniors power over juniors and men power over women. The mode of production generates only a small surplus, if any at all, and the product is controlled by the elders, who have various mechanisms for distributing it. Exchange exists but is relatively restricted.

In the case of the history of India and China, some argued, various communal modes are followed by the development of an 'Asiatic' mode of production. Here access to land remains under communal control but formal ownership is transferred to the state. Relations of production have a peculiar dualism. At the village level, kin groups and the village have what amounts to usufructuary (that is, use) rights to the land but legal ownership of land and of large-scale irrigation works as well as control over long-distance trade is in the hands of the state and an associated aristocracy. Production generates a substantial and regular surplus and this surplus is appropriated by both state and aristocracy as a tax in kind, as forced labour or as ground rent (Godelier 1978: 224). This surplus is distributed and exchanged in a complex long-distance commodity chain. A broad-based 'commodification', that much-used concept in anthropology, is regarded as originating here long before the emergence of capitalism. Both local and long-distance markets develop on a regular basis. Major advances in the productive forces occur in tools, weapons, shipping and technology more generally. Socially, this provided the economic basis for the consolidation of class divisions, politically for the emergence of empires and culturally for the emergence of 'civilisation'.

It is the fact that the surplus was extracted while leaving communal relations intact which is held to explain the 'relative stagnation' of the economies of Asia over long historical periods. Empires came and went, but the village economy continued relatively intact. Modern Indian historians, political economists or not, accord some limited credence to the idea of long periods of relative economic stagnation in Indian pre-colonial history, but reject the idea of an Asiatic mode of production (Mukhia 1985).

French historians of Africa, influenced by this argument about the existence of an 'Asiatic' mode of production, identified what was claimed to be a distinctive 'African' mode. The notion here was that in all cases of African pre-colonial economies, whether in small subsistence economies dominated by kinship or village life or in the large trading empires which emerged in West Africa from the eighth century, private property in the chief means of production is practically unknown. Land remains communally owned by the

lineage, clan or the village group. What then was the basis of the large states? The answer provided was that these were essentially trading states. A tribal aristocracy transformed itself into a ruling class by becoming a trading aristocracy. In the case of West Africa, they controlled the trade in gold, salt and slaves. These products were obtained not by transforming the relations of production but by extracting tribute and by trade.

These arguments are important because, as was the case with the concept of the 'Asiatic' mode of production, this was an attempt to explain the relatively low level of the development of the productive forces in the pre-colonial period. According to these ideas, the relative stagnation in the pre-colonial African economy was due to the fact that the ruling classes obtained their wealth from exploiting long-distance trade. Due to their fundamentally mercantile character, they were not driven to develop the productive forces. Communal relations of production persisted undisturbed as the basis of the village economy. Where transformation from above began to take place in Dahomey in the nineteenth century, it was cut short by European colonial conquest (Coquery-Vidrovitch 1978).

In the case of Western economic history, however, the unique feature is the early emergence of private property in the relations of production. At one point Engels even writes of the existence of a 'Germanic' mode of production in which communal rights over land and forests exist side by side with private property (Godelier 1978: 226–7). But this is not the main line of development. In Greece and especially Rome, the original communal relationships to the means of production are superseded by the emergence of Ancient Slavery. Private property in land and slaves becomes the norm at least for patricians. The slave-owning class appropriates the entire product, including the surplus. Hence the tendency in such systems is for there to be very high rates of slave mortality and for there to be the need for a continuous source of re-supply. This is especially the case when, as in the plantation slavery in the Americas discussed at length in the work of Sidney Mintz (1985), slavery was involved in the production of a commodity, sugar, for an emergent world market. Exploitation in slavery is obvious and brutal. Although an enormous advance over previous modes, slavery was rife with inner contradictions. Because of its coerciveness, it is plagued by low productivity and the tendency to destroy the main force of production, human labour power. None the less, during slavery there is an enormous development of technology and this too is a period of empire and civilisation.

While the 'Asiatic' and 'African' modes persist in the East and in Africa, in the West (according to this view) slavery passes away, superseded by a relatively less brutal mode of production, Feudalism. Again the hallmark is the further development of private property in the means of production. The peasant obtains some means of production. He/she is no longer a slave but is

transformed into a serf. The dominant class does not take the entire product, only the surplus, although the surplus extracted may be larger than under slavery. Slave masters are transformed into landlords. But in Feudalism, the exploitation of labour is also visible and obvious. This is because surplus labour is extracted in a separate place and at a separate time: on manor land as distinct from the peasant plot, in various forms of forced labour service, in the form of commuted rent. In the case of capitalism, on the other hand, exploitation is concealed within what Marx called 'the hidden abode' of the production process.

The capitalist mode of production is the culmination of the early private property tradition of the West. What is critical here is not commodification in general but the commodification of labour power in particular. The means of production previously held by the peasant and the craftsman are expropriated. They are consolidated in the hands of the capitalist class as privately owned means of production. Peasants are no longer tied to the land or to the guild as in Feudalism. They are formally free to work for whichever capitalist they please. They are no longer serfs but workers.

The capitalist buys only the worker's labour power for which the worker is paid a wage. However, in return the capitalist extracts the labour of the worker over the length of the entire working day. The worker works both to pay him-/herself (a small part of the working day); to replace the existing stock of capital (another part of the working day); and to produce surplus value for the capitalist (often the longest part of the day). This surplus is appropriated as profit and accumulated as capital. Since the working day is not partitioned into three separate sections and labelled accordingly, but is simply an uninterrupted working day, it appears that the capitalist is paying the worker for the entire value of his/her entire day's labour. In fact the capitalist is only paying for the portion corresponding to the value of the worker's labour power. The organisation of the production process conceals the manner in which the surplus is extracted.

The extraction of surplus is accomplished in capitalism, unlike in other exploitative modes of production, largely by relying on economic means: on wage rates, prices, profits, credit, debt, the threat of unemployment, the commodification of housing and the organisation of the production process. This is unlike Ancient Slavery, the 'Asiatic' or 'African' mode or feudalism, in which direct force was an integral part of the production process. Naked force, although never far away in the institutions of the state, is held in reserve. Ideological and cultural forces, the media and the system of rights embodied in the rule of law, play a far more important role in ensuring social stability than in all other modes of production. This opens the door to a political economy of culture derived from the works of Antonio Gramsci, leading to the field of cultural studies (Hall 1997). Gramscian notions of 'hegemony'

become particularly appealing for cultural anthropologists seeking a more political culture concept (Crehan 2002).

This is also the point in political economy at which the notion of 'fetishism' emerges, a notion regaining currency in the work of Jean and John Comaroff and others on so-called 'occult economies' (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999; West 2003). This is the idea that the hidden nature of the process by which surplus value is generated, distributed and accumulated under capitalism leads to the mystification of the process in popular consciousness. Unable to see into the 'hidden abode', a belief system emerges which attributes the unusual wealth of the elite to occult practices. According to this argument, belief in an occult economy develops in social situations in which people find the sudden wealth of individuals inexplicable by secular means. This is held to be the case particularly among the severely impoverished in developing societies who already have a belief system which incorporates elements of sorcery and witchcraft. To many in such a situation, only occult practices can explain the sudden wealth of the local elite in the newly globalised 'millennial' world. This is one current application of the idea of fetishism, taken from political economy. The difference is that in this new work on 'ethnologies of suspicion', the source of the fetish is attributed to the new scale and complexity of exchange relationships, the global marketplace. Fetishism is not theorised as originating in the growth of a global division of labour and production process, as in traditional political economy (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999).

One consequence of capitalist relations of production is that it is a far more productive economic system than all previous modes of production. It facilitates an unprecedented accumulation of capital and concentration and centralisation of the means of production. Huge corporations arise. Large financial entities and stock markets emerge. Technical progress takes place at an unprecedented rate and reaches hitherto unknown levels. The division of labour becomes international and scientific technology is applied directly to the process of production. There is an immense socialisation and internationalisation of the forces of production. Capital is systematically exported to and subordinates other less-capitalist economies. A global economy emerges.

Yet the means of production continue to be privately owned. It is this fundamental contradiction of the capitalist system which is thought to generate crises of overproduction and which ultimately results in its transformation. What socialism is thought to achieve, from this point of view, is a fundamental harmonisation. The means of production are removed from private ownership and placed in public ownership. The social relations of production now become realigned with the social nature of the forces of production.

The first point to note here is that this is a theory of value, a theory of money

and a theory of 'realisation'. The theory of the export of capital is also a theory of the economic basis of imperialism, which is an integral part of the political economy outlook. In keeping with its focus, a distinction is made between the sphere in which value arises and the sphere in which it is exchanged, realised and distributed. In political economy, value is created only in the process of production, never in the process of exchange. The second point is the source of value. It is human labour that is the chief force of production and the source of value in the economic sense. This is regarded as a given for all economic systems. A basic distinction is made at this point between two differing senses of value, 'use value' and 'value'. Use value has to do with the physical properties of a product that make it useful in one way or another. Value in the second sense has to do with the importance attached to goods and services and is socially assigned. This is so whether production is for self-consumption or for exchange. Once the division of labour and market relations emerge, value in this second, social sense is necessarily expressed in 'exchange value'. In a capitalist economy exchange value is roughly approximated in price. Likewise, money is a measure and a store of this value. Distribution and exchange are the spheres where value is realised but not where it is generated. Demand and supply cause fluctuations in exchange value but are not themselves its source. For instance, they may cause fluctuations in the value of currencies, but the source of the relative value of currencies is necessarily the relative productivity of the economies to which these currencies belong, more or less captured over a long period of time in balance of payment transactions. The source of exchange value and thus of value in this economic sense is the quantity of socially necessary labour time expended on its production.

The third point to note is that the production of value, crucial though it is, is only one part of the economic process. This value still has to be 'realised'. After being produced, the products which now embody value have to be consumed. In a subsistence economy some of the crop has to be stored for future use. Food or other goods may have to be exchanged for tools and other craft items. This can become a fairly complicated process. Severe inequalities may arise, especially in gender relations, even though fully-fledged classes have not yet arisen. As the work of the French Marxist anthropologists already mentioned has shown, seniors often exploit juniors. As the work of Josephides demonstrated, men seriously exploit women.

In a capitalist economy the process of realisation is infinitely more complex. Almost every single product and service is bought and sold on the market, including human labour power. This in itself is a very complex process of exchange given that some goods are for direct consumption, some are for consumption in the process of production and that there is a continuous (although cyclical) expansion of the process of production. Today one is dealing with a global market, in particular a global stock and currency market.

Once the forces of production achieve this high level of socialisation, the social value embodied in goods and services can only be expressed through this process of exchange, with realisation now taking place on an international scale. Given the global scale of the production process, a global process of exchange becomes inescapable. The social importance that goods and services have today is internationally evaluated and no longer the 'decision' of the economy of a single nation or region. Global market exchange then becomes the only feasible way for the globally-embodied value in products to find expression. Markets, although fluctuating, distorted, manipulated and subject to periodic crises in the short term, over the long term provide the economy with a social verdict. Within the limits of the class relations of capitalism, markets are a social mechanism for measuring the value accorded by consumers to a particular good or service relative to others and for the distribution of surplus value across the economy.

Furthermore, under capitalism, the socially necessary labour time embodied in goods and services takes the form of their cash value. Value embodied physically or in a specific service has to be converted into its money equivalent. From this intake wages have to be paid; raw materials, utilities and other supplies have to be bought; rent and interest have to be paid; provision has to be made for depreciation; wholesaling, retailing, advertising, marketing and other producer services have to be paid; capital has to be accumulated and the next round of production expanded by reinvestment in the production process. The process of the realisation and distribution of value, especially of surplus value, among all these parties and among the different branches of the economy, becomes extraordinarily complex.

Because it takes production as its point of departure, political economy has often lost sight of the dynamics of the processes of distribution, exchange and accumulation of surplus value. Neglect of price and profit mechanisms generally, both theoretically and in practical policy, has been a common and fatal weakness of political economy. Yet these processes provide the main mechanism for measuring and realising social value when production takes place on a large scale. The market goes beyond being a necessary feedback mechanism to the production process: it is itself part of the realisation process, with a profound effect on this production process itself. Even where the means of production are socially owned and there is some degree of central planning, some social process of distribution and exchange remain the only way to realise value in an economy in which large-scale national, regional or global production takes place. Price and profit mechanisms continue to play an invaluable role in such an economy, giving powerful indications of the social value really embodied in goods and services and in how value should be distributed between different enterprises and branches of the economy (Nove 1983).

This is why the neglect of objective measures of value in the purchasing decisions of real consumers, including consumption for production, has been fatal for the economies which claim to be socialist. This is also why contemporary anti-globalisation theory which attempts to develop economic alternatives to globalisation essentially by critiquing and restricting the process of exchange is so problematic from the point of view of political economy (Cavanagh 2002). These 'localist' alternatives leave intact the relations of production which give rise to the market. This leads to the idea of trying to abolish globalisation by restricting the role and scale of exchange rather than by redirecting globalisation through forms of social ownership and control of the means of production, and supervision and regulation of the international market.

History, historicism and 'time'

These theories raise fundamental questions about the economic development process and about economic history as a whole. The dominant idea in political economy is the idea of progress derived from the Enlightenment in the form of historical and dialectical materialism. This approach to economic history makes two principal assumptions that have been strongly contested, both by anthropologists who adopt the political economy approach and by those who do not.

The first assumption is that there is an objective social reality 'out there' that exists independent of the consciousness of the anthropologist. In other words, social and cultural reality is not 'constructed' but 'discovered', albeit through a cognitively complex and contradictory process. This objective social reality, the mode of production, is the appropriate subject matter of the discipline of economic anthropology.

This whole complex of economics, politics, and social inequalities is often referred to as a 'social formation'. This idea is sometimes expressed in abstract philosophical terms: that it is social being (economics, politics) that determines social consciousness (culture, ideology), not social consciousness that determines social being. In this sense, deeply influenced by Hegelian philosophical ideas, the Scottish–English civil society tradition and French rationalism, political economy is more in the tradition of social than of cultural anthropology.

Second, there is the much-disputed notion that these modes of production and the social formations that arise from them develop through history in an evolutionary sequence. The idea here is that it is possible to construct a theoretically coherent and objective global economic history, a unified history of humanity that is at the same time a history of human progress. In this line of thinking such a history is not simply an account of technological or material progress; it is at the same time a broad story of human social, political and

spiritual emancipation. Such a view clearly assumes the existence of a single objective notion of time, one which has a validity beyond any specific cultural construction. It is this idea-complex which is characterised by the term 'historicism' and rejected as a modernist illusion by all trends in history and anthropology influenced by post-modernism. Whether such an exercise in historicism is possible at all, how fruitful such an exercise would be and what are the broader consequences of adhering to such a 'totalising' perspective of human history, continues to be hotly debated in the discussions of the work of historians such as Chakrabarty and Pomeranz (Chakrabarty 2000; Pomeranz 2001; see also American Anthropological Association 2002: 179).

Broadly speaking, there have been three approaches to this debate within political economy, all of which accept the objectivity of time and reject the charge of historicism. The first has been the orthodox schematic one which prevailed during the period of Soviet dominance of Marxist theory. This view laid down a rigid schema of four universal economic and historical epochs that succeeded one another inexorably and on a global scale. Primitive communalism was succeeded by Slavery which was succeeded by Feudalism. Feudalism was succeeded by Capitalism, which has been superseded by socialism. According to this self-serving interpretation of Marx and Engels, the Soviet Union therefore was no ordinary nation. It was the culmination of thousands of years of human economic history!

Anthropologists who accepted such dogma necessarily were compelled to find 'Feudalism' in Africa and to hunt for signs of a 'Slave' mode in China. Moreover, in addition to such absurdities, they were required to accept and propagate the notion that this single unified global economic history was at its core the economic history of the Western world. Other 'people without history', the usual subjects of anthropological enquiry, could be historicised, but only as objects within the framework of an irresistible Western economic dynamic. They had economies to which things were done by the West in the process of Western colonial expansion. Their own distinctive course of economic development, if such existed at all, was of purely local significance, a dead end at the global level. The initiative in world economic history belonged solely to the West (Wolf 1982). 'Anthropological peoples' remained without history in that broader global sense.

The French structural Marxists adopted a different approach. They succeeded in re-opening within the framework of political economy the critical general question of the diversity and coherence in global economic history. This was done from two points of view, empirical and philosophical. Rather than proceeding from a grand conception of world economic history, this approach was more from the bottom up. Meillassoux (1970), in his detailed empirical analysis of the economy of the Guro of the Ivory Coast, posited a 'lineage' mode of production combined with a dominating

'colonial–commercial' mode. Terray (1972) went further and argued that what appeared to be a single lineage mode in Guro was in reality two modes, one based on the labour of all members of the village and another based on labour confined to the lineage.

This reintroduced the notion of 'articulation' of modes of production in a single production system. What this term meant was that empirically a production system could consist of more than one mode of production, 'articulated' in such a way that one of the modes was the dominant one (Foster-Carter 1978). In the United States, Wolf, influenced by world-systems theory, carried forward this idea, trying unsuccessfully to eliminate Feudalism as a mode and to merge all pre-capitalist class economies into a single 'tributary' mode of production (Wolf 1982). As was swiftly pointed out by Godelier, this clearly was confusing different labour processes *within* a single mode, with different modes. But he himself complicated the picture further by reviving the idea of the 'Asiatic' mode of production (Godelier 1978). As was pointed out above, Coquery-Vidrovitch went further and proposed an 'African' mode of production.

What was critical for economic history in this second approach was not the specific theoretical constructs elaborated. A more basic issue was at stake, the 'plurality of forms of transition to class society' and 'of the [diverse] way[s] in which inequality is introduced into classless societies and leads to the appearance of antagonistic contradictions and the formation of a dominant class' (Godelier 1978: 237–43). As a result of this work, structuralist political economy returned to a view more compatible with traditional anthropological relativism. It ceased to treat Western economic history, characterised by an early development of private property, as the norm and paradigm for all economic history. In fact, the Western case became the exception. A relative de-centring of the West was achieved that had not been the case with world-systems theory (Wallerstein 1997).

But structural Marxism went further. Deeply influenced by the structuralism of Lévi-Strauss and Althusser, it emphasised that structures were 'synchronic' not 'diachronic'. The logic of structures led them to perpetually reproduce themselves. They were fundamentally ahistorical. This notion inclined structural Marxists to the view that history itself had no 'structure': there was no force generating change from within; change itself had no logic. Each 'mode' existed in its own right, 'led' in no particular direction, was part of no larger, structurally coherent, global whole. It was therefore difficult to speak of a theoretically coherent universal human economic history.

These conclusions are not unproblematic. They have the effect of reducing the epistemological status of history relative to anthropology, the only level at which structures are thought to exist. The character of 'structure' also becomes

ambiguous. Structure ceases to be economic and objective in the orthodox political economy sense. Instead economic structure becomes only one of an ensemble of structures that constitute society and culture, in the characteristic Durkheimian and Lévi-Straussian manner, instances of the *conscience collectif*. One and the same symbolic system or 'deep structure' expresses itself in language, marriage rules, religion and the mode of production, each of which mirrors the others (Dews 1994).

This mentalistic notion of the economy as an expression of a cultural structure has had a lasting impact on the work of many anthropologists, for example that of Marshall Sahlins (for example, 1978). More to the point, by locating causality in a self-subsistent 'structure', both individual and collective agency is undermined. Structures have a 'logic' of their own and seem to be able to 'act' of their own accord. Economic determinism is rejected and replaced by a supra-individual cultural determinism.

Yet structural political economy stopped short of the rejection of the notion of objective historical time, the view put forward by Leach (1976), for example. Given the basic assumptions of Marxism, this critique of historicism could only be very partially accepted. Godelier affirmed 'plurality' in the various trajectories of economic history. At the same time, by a complex line of reasoning, he reaffirmed the idea that there was such a thing as global economic history and that Western economic history provided the only framework for this. He concluded by arguing that while modes of production were diverse and did not succeed each other in any pre-ordained direction, Western economic history still provided the 'typical line of development of humanity'. This is allegedly because 'it alone has created the pre-conditions for Western and all other societies to pass beyond the organisation of class society' (Godelier 1978: 246–8).

Godelier wrote of Western economic history, 'It is typical because it has value as a "model" or "norm" because it *provides possibilities* which no other single history has offered and gives other societies the possibility of *saving themselves the intermediary stages*' (1978: 248–9; original emphasis). This is an allusion to one of the hotly debated topics in economic development theory of that period, the notion of bypassing economic stages. This was the issue of whether an underdeveloped economy could advance rapidly to the level of a developed socialist economy without first passing through a number of stages. This was not only a theoretical debate, but one filled with major political implications. Soviet-dominated political economy took the view that bypassing was not possible and that to argue otherwise was to lapse into voluntarism. The Soviet view affirmed the necessity of a relatively long and complex transitional period of what was termed 'non-capitalist' development. Godelier rejected this argument. With the collapse of socialism in Eastern Europe, the far-reaching extension of market relations in China and the global

triumph of neoliberalism, these arguments have been resolved by life itself. However, at the purely theoretical level, they remain open.

Political economy also rejected the views of the *Annales* school in which there are a plurality of 'temporal strata and rhythms – the political, economic, the geographical' (Dews 1994: 112; see Braudel 1982). Likewise, political economy rejects the thinking of advocates of German 'conceptual' history (*Begriffsgeschichte*) such as Reinhart Koselleck, who argue that the concept of an objective historical time is a cultural artefact, itself requiring explanation, one particular view of historical time that emerged under certain identifiable historical and cultural conditions. The argument here is that it is a modernist myth to imagine that the concept of objective historical time has a general validity, least of all for all epochs of European history. It can therefore have no supra-historical validity and cannot provide a framework for a general human history, which, indeed, cannot ever be said to exist in the objective sense (Koselleck 1994).

Similar ideas were developed at the same time in the work of Michel Foucault, who had been Althusser's student (Foucault 1994). These critiques of historicism continue to have a powerful influence in early twenty-first-century economic anthropology through the general influence of poststructuralism. The ideas of Edward Said (1995) and Partha Chatterjee (1993), very much in this vein, have also had a major impact. Ultimately, the effect of these ideas is to relocate the economy in the domain of culture in the manner of Sahlins, and to establish a radical incommensurability between differing economies (Sahlins 2001). Thinking along these lines influences the even more critical issue of the economic development of the Third World. The very notion of 'development' is now called into question (Escobar 1994; Gardner 1996).

But there is a third attitude to economic history in the political economy tradition. This approach also reaffirms historicism. This line of reasoning is of particular importance for economic anthropology because it has the consequence of problematising the relationship between production and exchange in a theory focused on production. This is a political economy deeply influenced by Hegel and the writings of the young Marx in the *Economic and philosophical manuscripts* (1844) and *The German ideology* (1846). It conceives of economic history as a dialectical process (Hegel 1979; Lukacs 1971). The objectivity of historical time and the structural coherence of global economic history are affirmed. But this structural coherence is not stable in the manner characteristic of a Lévi-Straussian deep structure. Not binary oppositions constitute the economic structure, but irreconcilable internal contradictions. It is the thrust to resolve these antagonisms that necessarily leads to economic advance and which is the basis of the coherence in human history.

The crucial point here is the manner in which the antagonisms are overcome, by a process captured in the Hegelian notion of *Aufhebung* or 'sublation of bourgeois Gesellschaft' (Fritsche 1999: 153). Historical advance is not conceived of as a simple negation of the old by the triumphant march of the new economy. On the contrary, all that is harmful is shed but at the same time, all that is worthwhile and of lasting value is retained and extended. It is superseded not in the sense of being abandoned, but through a process of purification and substantive extension. From this point of view global economic history, although ruptured by the transformation of one mode of production into another, is also a process of continuity and cumulative human economic advance.

This is an idea of compelling importance. An anthropological political economy that is humanist because it is dialectical has particularly profound political and economic consequences. For example, one result is that abstract 'bourgeois rights', such as freedom of speech, movement and assembly and of the rule of law, stripped of their formalism, contain many elements of lasting human value (Neumann 1996). The same applies to the market and to exchange relations in general. Unlike what has occurred in all examples of socialism so far developed, the transformation of capitalist economy cannot simply attempt to cancel previously existing economic relations on the spurious grounds that they are bourgeois: on the contrary, transformation must seek to expand them by making them substantive. The market or, for that matter, commodification, cannot be simply abolished. Paradoxically, relations of exchange can only be 'sublated', a process of extension which gives them substance. This approach to political economy has major implications for efforts to theoretically critique capitalist globalisation.

References

Althusser, L. and E. Balibar 1998. *Reading capital*. London: Verso.

American Anthropological Association 2002. (Un)imaginable futures: anthropology faces the next 100 years. 101st Annual Meeting American Anthropological Association, New Orleans, 2002.

Asad, T. and H. Wolpe 1976. Concepts of modes of production. *Economy and Society* 5: 470–501.

Bates, R.H. 1987. *Essays on the political economy of rural Africa*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Braudel, F. 1982. *On history*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Cavanagh, J. (ed.) 2002. *Alternatives to economic globalization: a better world is possible*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

Chakrabarty, D. 2000. *Provincializing Europe*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Chatterjee, P. 1993. *Nationalist thought and the colonial world: a derivative discourse*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Comaroff, J. and J.L. Comaroff 1999. Occult economies and the violence of abstraction. *American Ethnologist* 26: 279–301.

Coquery-Vidrovitch, C. 1978. Research on an African mode of production. In *Relations of production: Marxist approaches to economic anthropology* (ed.) D. Seddon. London: Frank Cass.

Crehan, K. 2002. *Gramsci*: *culture and anthropology*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Dews, P. 1994. Althusser, structuralism and the French epistemological tradition. In *Althusser: a critical reader* (ed.) G. Elliott. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
Dupré, G. and P.-P. Rey 1978. Reflections on the relevance of a theory of the history of exchange. In *Relations of production: Marxist approaches to economic anthropology* (ed.) D. Seddon. London: Frank Cass.
Escobar, A. 1994. *Encountering development: the making and the unmaking of the Third World*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Foster-Carter, A. 1978. Can we articulate 'articulation'? In *The new economic anthropology* (ed.) J. Clammer. New York: St. Martin's Press.
Foucault, M. 1994. *The order of things*. New York: Vintage Books.
Frankenberg, R. 1978. Economic anthropology or political economy? (I): The Barotse social formation. In *The new economic anthropology* (ed.) J. Clammer. New York: St. Martin's Press.
Fritsche, J. 1999. *Historical destiny and national socialism in Heidegger's Being and Time*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Gardner, K. 1996. *Anthropology, development and the post-modern challenge*. London: Pluto.
Godelier, M. 1978. The concept of the 'Asiatic mode of production' and the Marxist model of social evolution. In *Relations of production: Marxist approaches to economic anthropology* (ed.) D. Seddon. London: Frank Cass.
Graeber, D. 2001. *Toward an anthropological theory of value: the false coin of our own dreams*. New York: Palgrave.
Hall, S. 1997. Gramsci's relevance for the study of race and ethnicity. In *Stuart Hall: critical dialogues in cultural studies* (eds) D. Morley and K.-H. Chen. New York: Routledge.
Hegel, G.W.F. 1979. *The phenomenology of spirit*. London: Oxford University Press.
Josephides, L. 1985. *The production of inequality: gender and exchange among the Kewa*. London: Tavistock.
Koselleck, R. 1994. *Futures past: on the semantics of historical time*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
Leach, E. 1976. *Culture and communication: the logic by which symbols are connected. An introduction to the use of structural analysis in social anthropology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Lukacs, G. 1971. *History and class consciousness*. London: Merlin.
Meillassoux, C. 1970. *Anthropologie économique des Gouro de Côte d'Ivoire: de l'économie de subsistance a l'agriculture commerciale*. Paris: Mouton.
Mintz, S. 1985. *Sweetness and power: the place of sugar in modern history*. New York: Viking.
Mukhia, H. 1985. Was there feudalism in Indian history? In *Feudalism and non-European societies* (eds) H. Mukhia and T.J. Ayres. London: Frank Cass.
Neumann, F.L. 1996. The change in the function of law in modern society. In *The rule of law under siege: selected essays of Franz L. Neumann and Otto Kircheimer* (ed.) W.E. Scheuerman. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Nove, A. 1983. *The economics of feasible socialism*. London: Unwin Hyman.
Pomeranz, K. 2001. *The great divergence: China, Europe and the making of the modern world economy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Sahlins, M. 1978. *Culture and practical reason*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Sahlins, M. 2001. The cosmologies of capitalism: the trans-Pacific sector of the world system. In *Culture in practice: collected essays*, M. Sahlins. New York: Zone Press.
Said, E.H. 1995. *Orientalism: Western conceptions of the Orient*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
Seddon, D. (ed.) 1978. *Relations of production: Marxist approaches to economic anthropology*. London: Frank Cass.
Strathern, M. 1988. *The gender of the gift: problems with women and problems with society in Melanesia*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Terray, E. 1972. *Marxism and 'primitive' societies*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
Wallerstein, I.M. 1997 (1974). *The modern world-system I: capitalist agriculture and the origins of the European world-economy in the sixteenth centur*y. New York: Academic Press.
West, H.G. (ed.) 2003. *Transparency and conspiracy: ethnographies of suspicion in the new world order*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Wilson, G. 1939. The land rights of individuals among the Nyakusa. *Africa* 12: 381–3.
Wolf, E.R. 1982. *Europe and the people without history*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Wolf, E.R. 1999. *Envisioning power: ideologies of dominance and crisis*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

4 Decisions and choices: the rationality of economic actors

Sutti Ortiz

While economists are concerned with how markets direct the actions of profit-maximising actors, anthropologists have been interested in exploring how actors' perceptions, social relations and obligations affect their economic decisions. This wider social perspective became necessary when agricultural research stations began to design programmes to increase the productivity of small farmers in Africa, Asia and Latin America. It became clear that an economic evaluation of the technical packages designed by agronomists did not suffice. To avoid failures, researchers had to incorporate in their analysis an evaluation of the ecological, social and political conditions of the region and the goals and preferences of farmers. They also had to consider the information that was available to producers and the risks that they had to assume. This wider approach was known as Farming Systems Research and relied on interdisciplinary teams that included anthropologists and sociologists, though in secondary roles.

Economic actors: individuals or households?

One of the key findings that anthropologists and sociologists brought to Farming Systems Research was that, in non-Western societies, resources were often controlled by household or larger kin-based units rather than by individuals. Hence, production and investment decisions had to be made at the household or homestead level. Farming Systems Research adopted their recommendation; the household became the unit of analysis in surveys and assessments of production decisions (Mook 1986; Shaner, Philipp and Schmehl 1982; Turner and Brush 1987). Anthropologists and sociologists arrived at a similar conclusion when they studied consumption and job search activities in capitalist societies.

Anthropologists, however, were not the only ones to identify households as decision-making units. A.V. Chayanov had already recognised, in the 1920s, the significance of households in production. He argued that the amount of labour that peasants committed to farm production related to tax and rent obligations, replacement of equipment, the consumption needs of the household and their subjective evaluation of leisure against the drudgery of

working in the fields (Chayanov 1966; Durrenberger 1984; Ellis 1988; Tannenbaum 1984).

Marshall Sahlins (1972) introduced this explanatory model to English-speaking anthropologists and it became popular during the 1960s and 1970s. It also attracted the attention of some agricultural economists when Daniel Thorner commented on and translated Chayanov's Russian text in the 1960s. However, some of the assumptions contained in the model limited its applicability. The most salient assumptions are that: households are not internally differentiated; peasant households are not plagued by uncertain outcomes or land scarcity; household members pool and share all resources (Barnum and Squire 1979; Ellis 1988).

Gary Becker agreed that, even in capitalist societies, the household is a unit of production as well as consumption. Production decisions are related to the ability or desire of household members to participate in the labour market and vice versa. A wife, for example, can choose to stay home to bake the daily bread, take care of children and make their own clothing. But she may also choose to work part-time and purchase ready-made food or hire home help. Becker argued that the mix of home-produced or purchased goods and services is related to prices, forgone wages of stay-at-home workers and available technology. The number of children, likewise, is expected to relate to the cost of upbringing and expected future benefits. The underlying principle guiding the household decisions is the desire to maximise utility at the household level (Becker 1965, 1981; Ellis 1988).

Becker's model became known as the New Household Economic model; it influenced many economists concerned with agricultural development in Africa and Latin America. Low (1986) made use of Becker's model to analyse the behaviour of farmers in Africa by adding some other relevant conditions: the cost of purchasing food relative to the cost of producing it, the ability to gain access to land as family size increases. Since these conditions are not often met, he challenged the assumption that family welfare always increases with a corresponding increase in the agricultural productivity of their land. Low pointed out that welfare is, in part, a function of purchased goods, often from wages that are more likely to be earned by men than by women in the African setting. Furthermore, as Murray (1981) had pointed out, labour migrations erode the labour available for farming and burdened the women of the household with triple duties: farming the land, producing food for the household and taking care of the children. Thus, to understand production decisions and predict the welfare of household members it is important to evaluate all household activities (production and wage-earning activities) and the pooling and distribution of food and cash.

Becker's formal econometric representation of his argument, however, is problematic because it assumes that the head of the household is the

coordinator of activities and the one who makes decisions on behalf of its members. He also assumes that the preferences of all household members can be summarised in a single utility curve and that this curve represents what is best for the family. When it was pointed out that the head of a household may not be as concerned with the preferences of wives, sons and daughters as with his own preferences, Becker countered that it was in the interest of the head of household to behave altruistically (Becker 1965, 1981). His reply has met with the objection of some economists (Doss 1996; Hart 1992; Stark 1992) and with counter-evidence from anthropologists.

Rice farmers in Northern Cameroon

Massa sons remain in the compound where they were born and are joined eventually by their young wives (Jones 1986). Compounds are significant social and economic units but they are not a simple unit of production. All members must help with the planting, weeding and harvesting of a shared sorghum field. However, each of the husband's wives is assigned her own fields to grow food for herself and her children. Each of them has her own granary and decides what to grow and how much. The husband gives them some grain when their granaries are empty; in return, co-wives alternate cooking for him.

Rice production was introduced in the 1970s. The land used for this crop was controlled by a semi-autonomous government institution (SEMRY) that oversaw the management of irrigated fields, provided plough services, seedlings, fertilisers, herbicides and technical advice. Individuals had to register to receive a rice-growing plot and were charged a fee for the services rendered. Farmers were required to sell most of the paddy to SEMRY, but were allowed to retain some for home consumption. Thus rice agriculture yielded both cash and some food to each wife of the polygamous family.

The amount of rice grown depended on the willingness of the wives to contribute labour in their husbands' rice fields for a small recompense. Although they cannot altogether shirk working in the rice fields, wives did not commit the optimum amount of labour to maximise the income of the household; married women worked only 59 days in rice fields while unmarried women worked 74 days. Wives were not too interested in the income from rice fields since it was managed by the husband and men preferred to invest in cattle and bridewealth transactions rather than in the consumer goods that appealed to their wives. A wife could satisfy her preferences if she used more of her time to work in her own fields or to produce crafts for sale, and made her purchases from her separate income. Jones argues that by limiting their labour contribution, women were bargaining for a greater share of the rice sold. At the time of Jones's fieldwork, men were still unwilling to entice the labour of women with a greater

recompense. However, the bargaining over conflicting preferences might eventually be resolved and rice might become a more important cash crop.

Urban households in Mexico

Studies of nuclear households in urban Mexico also show a complex pattern of intra-household negotiations and distribution of resources. Seventy-three per cent of urban households are headed by a husband who has considerable authority and responsibility over his wife and unmarried children (Selby, Murphy and Lorenzen 1990). He must work for a wage to support his family, in a labour market that recompenses individuals for their efforts rather than for the needs of their families. Women and children must find ways of earning extra cash to cover household needs. Studies of household budgets, and contributions that each member makes, paint a picture similar to the one described by Jones. In one-third of the households in urban Oaxaca, the income earned by each is pooled. In another third, the husbands gave their wives a fixed amount of money for food expenses and paid for other expenses as the need arose. In the rest, which were mostly the poorest households, the husbands gave all the money to their wives, retaining only a share for their own personal expenses. Although women may manage the household budget, they are not the controllers of the income. A wife is unlikely to know how much her husband earns unless he shows her the pay stub.

The pooling of household income was more frequent in the households of Mexico City studied by Benería and Roldán (1987), where women worked at home assembling garments, toys or plastic containers. But even in this case, the men retained some cash, never revealing what they were keeping for themselves. This was a point of contention between spouses that often exploded into quarrels. Since the wives were responsible for buying food, clothing, paying rent and covering other regular household expenses, they either had to negotiate for a higher contribution or find ways of earning cash. The latter option was more frequent. However, how a wife balanced cash-earning, leisure and domestic activities was also dependent on the struggle over bargaining contributions from her husband. From Benería and Roldán's study it is clear that as long as the woman remained at home, she was the one who decided how many hours she dedicated to cash-earning activities. If she had an older daughter, she had the authority to recruit her help, though it is not clear how that was negotiated. It is both need and ambition for nicer furnishings, better clothing and education of the children that drove her decisions. It was her preferences, rather than a joint household preference curve and the opportunity wage of each household member, that determined the scope of her cash-earning activities. As her ability to contribute to household expenses increased, so did her bargaining power over the share that she received from her husband.

These two examples illustrate the complexity of household decisions and variations in patterns of resource pooling and control. Authoritarian heads of household, for example, might control most of the cash income but might have little say on how labour is allocated and income is spent. The danger of Becker's model is that it may generate unreliable predictions about domestic production and the distribution of income from cash crops, remittances or increased food production. Thus, economists should first examine the organisation of the household, the degree of autonomy and responsibility of each member, power relations and bargaining spaces allowed to members according to age and gender. It is equally important to determine the scope of conflicting preferences and the degree of income pooling. In the past decade, bargaining models have been proposed that address these issues (Doss 1996; Haddad, Hoddinott and Alderman 1997). They are useful to answer questions about the impact of income changes on welfare (Carter and Katz 1997; Duncan 1997; Folbres 1997). For example, whether policies that increase the participation of women in labour markets might have a greater beneficial effect on the welfare and education of children than policies to increase cash crop production. Sociologists and anthropologists should continue to research this issue and economists should not neglect their findings (Alderman, Haddad and Hoddinott 1997).

Problem-solving actors

Rational choice is the heart of the microeconomic model of economic man, who is portrayed as a logical thinker who evaluates options and inputs consistently and coherently, and selects those that maximise his utility. Economic men and women are expected to decide 'rationally' how much to produce or buy and sell. If their decisions do not conform to predictions, it raises questions about social or market impediments to an efficient allocation of resources. Some economists even argue that when rational choice is possible, it is unnecessary to protect individuals from the consequences of their choices.

Anthropologists, psychologists and sociologists do not deny that economic decisions, sometimes, may be logically reasoned and may even be a profit-maximising solution to problematic constraints. However, they question the universality of profit or utility maximisation even in advanced capitalist societies. Psychologists have argued that allocation problems are too complex and preclude the reasoning process implied in economic models. They have instead encouraged an examination of how decisions are arrived at and options evaluated. This substantive approach leads to contrasting and revealing propositions that have challenged or have served to correct microeconomic theories. On the one hand, the substantive study of decisions has shown that actions that microeconomic models judge as irrational may be reasonable

responses to conditions faced by peasant producers. On the other hand, it has shown that the standard theory of choice 'allows many foolish decisions to be called rational' (Kahneman and Tversky 2000: 772).

Allocations under uncertainty

Regardless of their ability to argue 'rationally', economic men are rarely so well informed that they can predict with certainty what output they will obtain or at what price they will be able to sell what is produced. Peasant farmers have a particularly difficult time making such predictions. They must allocate resources expecting a very wide range of results, some will be most welcomed while others could have disastrous consequences. For instance, West African small farmers in Burkina Faso, as a result of poor soils and intermittent rains, have to endure a 24 per cent chance of subsistence shortfall (Carter 1997).

Field researchers cannot fail to notice that peasant farmers are familiar with risks. Answers to questions about yields often start with a preamble about 'who knows' or 'God willing'. They are not risk averse as predicted in studies that estimate risk attitudes from responses to gambling games (Binswanger 1980). Peasants' responses to risky new technology vary according to their circumstances. Cancian (1979, 1980) states that farmers with less available land and with lower income are, paradoxically, more likely to adopt innovations than those who have greater access to land and higher income from production. However, he noticed that as the adoption process progresses, the proportion of better-off farmers willing to innovate increases significantly. He linked the change of response to increased availability of information. When fertilisers were made available to peasants in a northern community in Mexico in 1972, 39 per cent of the poorest and 53 per cent of the richest farmers purchased it (Dewalt and Dewalt 1980). However, the percentage increased when credit was made available. The difference in rates of adoption between the two groups decreased; 78 per cent of the poorest and 71 per cent of the richest farmers purchased fertilisers. To the poorest peasants who were able to produce only 64 per cent of the corn needed for subsistence without fertilisers, that input was attractive. Middle-income farmers were able to meet consumption needs; they showed little interest in a purchase that would increase cost of production. However, the richest farmers invested in fertilisers because it allowed them to sell surplus corn. 'Social situation rather than personal characteristics should be given primacy in explaining adoption and in designing programs to promote change' (Cancian 1979: 89). Individuals are more likely to express aversion to losses that affect the status quo than to gains and advantages (Kahneman and Tversky 1997).

Protective strategies

One key aspect of the Mexican case study is that the farmers were trying to

ensure a basic food supply through production rather than from purchases, in order to reserve limited and uncertain cash resources for other important expenses. Economists have labelled this a 'safety-first strategy' (Anderson 1979; Lipton 1968). It is a common practice among Colombian peasants to set aside a field large enough to produce food for household consumption. They refer to this as a *pan coger* (bread-yielding) field. Cash crops are planted in the remainder of their land. Another frequently employed strategy, used when land is plentiful, is to cultivate fields in different ecological niches (Orlove and Godoy 1986) or plant a field with different varieties of the same crop (Brush 1977, 1982).

Anthropologists and sociologists have described a number of other socially embedded strategies that allow small farmers to confront uncertain prospects. Requests of hard-to-refuse food gifts or loans are often used to alleviate the consequences of fluctuating incomes and outputs. It is hard to document the significance of food gifts since households keep no record, recalls are unreliable and it is hard for a researcher to identify which households are likely to be the recipients at a given time. Nevertheless, the significance of these exchanges is often verbally acknowledged. They are not regarded as insurance but as a moral obligation. A hungry kinsman would always receive a gift or loan of food as long as relations had been collaborative (Ortiz 1973: 225–39). The effectiveness of this protection depends on the degree of crop variance and the extent of social sharing.

In some societies these obligations are pervasive and affect the circulation of a significant share of household resources, but changing economic conditions can alter their effectiveness. Polier (2000) describes the impact of gifts on the income of men labouring for wages in the mines of western New Guinea. Native shifting agriculturists became the low-rank workers in the copper mines located two days' walk away from their home communities. The families of most of these labourers remained in their villages so that the wives could grow food to send to husbands or experiment with European food crops to sell for cash at the mines. When labourers receive their fortnightly paycheque, they are confronted by the innumerable requests from kinsmen for money for marriage payments, school fees and other expenses. Sharing their cash income assures the labourer protection for his wife and children and a place in his village, in the eventual loss of employment. But he does not consider the financial support he gives as an insurance premium, nor does he do a calculus of what he gives and receives. He also often resents the pressure of demands. 'Keeping one's income from being "eaten," they say, creates a challenge to conceal one's resources without flagrantly defying social norms of generosity and caregiving' (Polier 2000: 201). Polier cites an example of a labourer who regularly gave 30 per cent of his fortnightly income to his kinsmen to purchase store food and 5 per cent of his annual income for the

school fees of relatives. These migrant labourers open savings bank accounts, participate in rotating credit associations, open village stores and, at great expense, build solid houses in order to protect some of their wage income. Although the moral obligation to give was still a powerful protective force for those unable to find wage work, labourers had begun to wish that kin would act like strangers. There was already clear evidence of social differentiation and a rupture in solidary relations. When social, political or economic changes weaken social networks or introduce conflictive options, then redistribution to the poor and needy may suffer. But changes are often inevitable and welcome by some.

Patrons also come to the rescue of producers when illness strikes a family or crops are lost. Patrons, however, do not automatically emerge when needed. They are only available in societies where some of the following conditions prevail: considerable income differentiation, shortage of labourers, strong power asymmetries or elite control of resources (Platteau 1995). Furthermore, patrons will support only clients who have been willing to endure their demands. Patron–client relations are often stressful and fragile. They can be sustained only if patrons profit from them and clients need them (Scott 1985: 184–212).

Gifts, exchanges, savings accounts and credit associations serve as safety nets akin to food stamps, help from benevolent societies or bank accounts. It is thus important to understand the possible ramifications of policies geared to incorporate peasants more closely to fluctuating markets and the effect that it will have on safety strategies and the social networks that protect their welfare. When food crops become market commodities, food gifts often decrease as they conflict with the need to satisfy a demand for cash. It is also important to bear in mind that some policies and efforts to increase economic efficiency and productivity do affect access to land and constrain diversification, thus exposing peasants to greater risk from crop fluctuations. We have to ask ourselves whether peasant households have the capacity to protect themselves from ecological and market shocks when policies alter their access to land, weaken community relations and increase market exposure. This does not mean that some traditional systems offer social security without great social costs (Platteau 1991), but that we have to be ready to offer alternative strategies when their systems are undermined.

Processing information and ordering preferences

In their introduction to their textbook on microeconomics, Bardhan and Udry remark that their adherence to the principle of maximisation ‘should be regarded more as a crude heuristic devise than a definitive statement on human behavioral regularity’ (1999: 5). Nevertheless, they consider it a useful working hypothesis because it allows them to generate normative solutions to

theoretical problems. However, they warn us not to 'undervalue the substantive role of social interaction in influencing human behavior or in determining the rules of the game that individuals play' (1999: 5). Amartya Sen (1977, 1994) has expressed a stronger concern: the inability of microeconomic models to integrate relevant aspects of social reality when modelling economic behaviour.

Anthropologists have challenged some of the assumptions of microeconomic models by focusing on how culture and social relations frame the decision process. Mayer and Glave (1999: 345) suggest that Peruvian 'peasants evaluate profit and losses in terms of a simple cash-out and cash-in flow, ignoring household inputs and family labor'. Appadurai (1991) shows that food provision decisions by Indian women are made as part of other decisions, in a pre-attentive manner except when the problem becomes crucial. Other anthropologists have focused on how power and social conditions define options. Psychologists, instead, have focused on how decisions are made. They have examined how individuals simplify information in order to attend to their preferences and how they evaluate the uncertain outcomes they experience. Some of their findings and propositions have been used by some anthropologists to explore cropping decisions (Gladwin 1975, 1979a, 1979b, 1980) or marketing decisions (Quinn 1978).

Gladwin (1980) explored the cropping decisions of Guatemalan peasants using Tversky and Kahneman's information-processing paradigm (Tversky 1972; Tversky and Kahneman 1974). From interviews, Gladwin identified the crops or crop combinations that were considered by her informants. She then elicited farmers' constraints and evaluative elements: demand, suitability of crop to field and climate conditions, experienced yield variations, time and labour requirement of the crop, cost of inputs, timing of the harvest and attractiveness of the crop as a staple. From discussions with farmers, Gladwin was able to order sequentially the evaluative elements and constraints. The information-processing model used by Gladwin assumes that the farmer evaluates, for each crop, one element or constraint at a time. If the evaluations are positive, the farmer will dedicate some of the land to the crop. In this way he will consider each one of the crops or options, discarding some and retaining others. By eliciting the steps used by farmers to solve their allocation problem, Gladwin was able to recommend strategies that targeted the concerns of farmers and to identify technologies that preclude adoption because of high risk. For example, technologies that require less land or reduce demands of family labour may be more attractive to small farmers than technologies that increase yields.

Since Gladwin published her findings, psychologists have elaborated their heuristic models (Kahneman and Tversky 2000) and Kahneman was awarded the Nobel prize for his contribution. The power of this substantive approach is

that it elicits the options and conditions as visualised by the farmers. It also brings to attention options, derived from years of experience in farming and forest regeneration in their region, that might not have been entertained by technical experts. It will facilitate the design of appropriate technical packages or suggest a more flexible approach that builds on existing knowledge and competencies. Anthropologists still need to determine whether these models capture how farmers in other societies decide how to allocate resources and how they negotiate cultural rules and scripts.

Bargaining actors

Most peasants are not lone decision makers. They are forced to interact with others in order to gain access to land or labour. Peasants can expand production by borrowing, renting or sharecropping land. However, unless they have a large family they will also need to hire labourers or negotiate a reciprocal labour exchange. In either case, peasants cannot solve their problem by simply evaluating costs, risks and preferences. They have to negotiate a solution with others for labour and land. Bargaining peasants must cope with preferences and consider the transaction cost associated with each offer and counter-offer. Borrowing land may engage him in some future debt, sharecropping may limit how he can use the land.

Sharecropping

Sharecropping is an ancient institution that still pervades in many countries that do not restrict it or where there is no danger that the tenant or sharecropper might acquire rights to the land he tills. Its persistence has been explained by economists as a means of risk sharing or as a work incentive, when the work effort of a labourer is hard to observe. These contracts have been regarded as inefficient by some economists and efficient by others. While these arguments have served to focus on the range of advantages and disadvantages of the contracts, they have not helped to resolve divergent conclusions. There are still wide-ranging explanations for the use of share contracts and for the rationale used to determine shares (Hayami and Otsuka 1993). These arguments are unlikely to be resolved because the studies often compare very different sharecropping systems. Furthermore, the microeconomic models used to evaluate them routinely disregard related institutional arrangements.

Power imbalances, for example, are often disregarded, yet it is a critical issue in the bargaining process. A powerful landlord can limit access of inputs and bias the outcome of the bargain. Wells's (1984, 1996) account of the adoption of share contracts by strawberry producers in California and the subsequent return to day- and piece-rate contracts serve to illustrate the multiple characteristics of sharecropping and the role played by government, unions and growers' organisations in defining the nature of the contract.

Before the Second World War, 90 per cent of the strawberries in California were grown by Japanese families who were not allowed to own land but were able to farm shares (37.9 per cent) or leased land (51.1 per cent). The sharecropper contributed with labour and other inputs, which depended on the resources of each party, on the landlord's interest in farming and on the social relations between them. Sharecroppers in a single farm tended to be friends and relatives, often from the same prefecture in Japan. In many areas the sharecroppers and their landlords were protected by organisations that helped to negotiate appropriate arrangements and to settle disputes. The sharecroppers often participated in a marketing cooperative that handled 90 per cent of strawberries grown in California and played a key role in disseminating new technology for growing and marketing. These arrangements helped the Japanese sharecroppers to prosper.

The Second World War put an end to that prosperity when Japanese farmers were sent to detention camps. When the Alien Land Laws were repealed in 1952 and the Japanese were able to return to farming, they chose to return as landlords rather than sharecroppers. They increased production by using hired wage labourers. The Bracero programme assured growers of a cheap source of immigrant Mexican labourers and protection from competitive pressures from urban industries. Braceros had to return to Mexico when their jobs ended and could enter only through official channels that assigned them to registered growers. In 1963, Bracero labourers accounted for 63 per cent of the total strawberry-picking hours (Wells 1984: 13). Growers, however, lost their advantageous position during the 1960s, as the United Farm Workers of America (UFW) began to organise workers. Strikes, boycotts and the end of the Bracero programme in 1964 spelled the end of cheap labour. Furthermore, public outrage at the working conditions of seasonal labourers forced the state to extend protective legislation to curtail unfair labour practices. Strawberry production is extremely expensive and requires a considerable amount of quality labour, the only input that growers are able to control (Wells 1984: 12). One of the strategies used by growers to counter the rising cost of labour was to reorganise farm management. Instead of direct hire of piece-rate harvesters and day labourers, large growers divided their farms into 2.5–3.5-acre plots and assigned each to a family on a sharecropping basis. The owner, however, retained control over the technical aspects of strawberry agriculture and assigned a supervisor per large field. The landowners prepared the land, provided the plants, fertilisers, pesticides and machinery and indicated when each task had to be performed. The sharecropper was responsible for the labour required for maintaining the plots, harvesting, packing the fruit, hiring, paying and supervising non-family labour. The responsibility of and the share due to each party were spelled out in a written contract. Wells (1984: 17) explicitly indicates that the sharecroppers were not allowed to negotiate the

terms; they could only refuse to enter into the agreement. These conditions were acceptable to many candidates because of their illegal status. It was attractive to them because they could bring their families, and were offered housing and protection from immigration patrols.

While this particular form of sharecropping did increase incentive efforts while reducing the cost of labour in the short run, it eventually led to tensions and legal challenges. Strawberry producers had categorised their sharecroppers as independent contractors in order to bypass the labour legislation. It was a cherished identity for the striving migrant. Wells (1996), however, describes growing tensions at first with the growers' supervisors over performance, then with the growers over the remuneration they received. It culminated in a series of lawsuits against farm operators in the 1970s. She ascribes this move to the involvement of advocates and a rapprochement with the UFW, a union that claimed to advocate for the rights of Mexican migrants. The case was eventually settled out of court but it had profound implications for labour management. The court case served as a precedent for arguing that sharecroppers were wage workers in disguise, hence not exempt from protective labour legislation. The response of growers varied: some growers gave more autonomy to sharecroppers and required greater financial responsibility from them; other growers shifted back to hiring wage labourers. 'By 1987, the proportion of sharecropped berry acreage on the central coast had shrunk from about 50 percent to about 10 percent' (Wells 1996: 270).

As Sharma and Drèze (1996: 31) point out, 'the principal–agent model of sharecropping has been extremely useful in furthering our understanding of many crucial issues (such as the role of incentives in contractual choice), but as a characterisation of the tenant–landlord relationship it has important limitations'. Sharecropping can be a means of hiring reliable, cheap labourers. But when the landlords select well-endowed sharecroppers, they use this institution to mobilise cash resources or equipment; however, sharecropping is only one of the many ways for a farmer to gain access to capital inputs.

Hiring wage labourers

Neoclassical models no longer assume that an agricultural producer will select a contractual arrangement and wage that maximises his utility. He is expected to be content with a second-best solution that resolves a number of conflicting production problems: commodity prices, the cost of ensuring the intensity and quality of effort, the cost of gaining information about responsibility and reliability and the cost of attracting and hiring appropriate labourers. The seriousness of this last problem relates to whether ecological conditions exacerbate fluctuations in the demand for labour and require greater proficiency. Labourers, in turn, are expected to be concerned about the regularity and the level of expected income. These issues became apparent

with field experience, the availability of survey information and more detailed case studies.

The above problems are considered as key factors that explain farmers' choices and responses. The cost to screen applicants in order to avoid unsuitable labourers is used to explain farmers' reluctance to hire strangers. The use of labour contractors is explained as a strategy to reduce information costs and hiring costs. Labour contractors are considered to be in a better position to recruit labourers with a lower opportunity wage and more immune to unionisation efforts (Vandeman, Sadoulet and de Janvry 1991). However, they tend to be avoided when labourers are needed for longer seasons and when ability and quality of performance are important. The preference for piece-rate contracts at harvest time is accounted for by its effectiveness as an effort-enticing arrangement. The strategy of retaining some labourers on secure long-term day contracts, while hiring others only when needed, is explained as a means to reduce costs without risking reliability and availability of labour at critical moments. The willingness of some labourers to tolerate lower day incomes or day wages in exchange for longer employment or attachment to a farm is explained as risk avoidance on the part of the labourer.

Although neoclassical models have become more effective analytical tools, economists are still plagued by conflicting conclusions, the inability to fully explain the co-existence of many different contractual arrangements in one locality or farm, the occasional wide dispersion of wages and the gendered nature of the labour market. They also cannot explain why producers do not always devise more appropriate ways of resolving problems related to the quality of effort or the cost of labour.

Anthropologists and sociologists, well versed in comparative studies, are familiar with the limitations of explanatory theories and do not expect to conclude with a simple universal principle. These social scientists regard labour markets as socialised and politicised places where prospective labourers and producers meet. What transpires in that encounter depends on the bargaining power of each, the willingness of a powerful farmer to bargain rather than to set the terms of the offer, and the space he allows to discuss offer and counter-offer. Greater power may entice hiring strategies to reduce labour costs at the expense of collaborative labour arrangements. Political ideologies of domination or exploitation may enhance collusion among participants, limiting the competitiveness of the market. It is, in fact, impossible to fully understand market behaviour unless one incorporates relevant social and cultural factors within the analytical framework. As Robert Solow (1990: 49) indicates, 'We do not compete for each other's job by nibbling away at wage levels because we have been taught that it is unfair to do so, or demeaning, or unacceptable, or perhaps self-destructive'. Once those norms are established

'they draw their force from shared values and social approbation or disapprobation, not from calculation' (1990: 49).

Colombia's coffee labour market, 1970–86

During the 1970s a new coffee agrotechnology was introduced in Colombia that increased the productivity of groves (Ortiz 1999). It was quickly accepted because the orchards were in need of renovation and the price of coffee in the international market was increasing at a rapid rate. Colombians refer to this period as the coffee bonanza, which brought rewards not only to producers but also to agricultural labourers. The conversion required a steady crew of labourers to plant, prune, weed and fertilise the trees and a large number of harvesters to handle incremental yields. The coffee bonanza transformed the central Colombian highlands and initially enriched producers. However, it also tightened labour markets and forced producers to increase the piece-rate paid to harvesters. The average day wage (or its equivalent) paid to coffee labourers throughout the year began to rise above all other agricultural wages, matching as well some urban wages. Despite rising labour costs, producers did not accept the recommendation of the Coffee Federation to use sharecroppers, for fear of losing control over land. They also avoided labour contractors because of the expense, disregarding the likelihood that contractors would tap a cheaper labour pool. Except for tree planting, landlords or their managers valued their control over the labour process. Allied to their overt distrust of labour contractors was a dislike of non-local labourers, who they consider to be potential troublemakers. Whenever possible they hired locals, except for women, who they regarded as ill-suited to work in the fields. Yet, historical accounts list women as major participants in the harvest. Why, then, would a maximising producer who distrusts outsiders avoid hiring local women? The only possible explanation is that either women refuse, or that their husbands and fathers oppose their going to work in the coffee groves.

That is, in fact, the case. Women fear malevolent gossip and fathers or husbands are unlikely to allow it. Labour supply is clearly structured by social rules about gendered appropriate behaviour. However, if we relegate this social rule to an externality we cannot explain the historic transformation of labour supply in coffee agriculture in Colombia. Nor can we explain the presence of a large number of women in one of the largest farms surveyed in 1985. I argue that women worked in the harvest before 1960 because the family needed the income and many of these families lived on the farms where they worked; women did not have to go elsewhere to harvest. Their subsequent compliance with social rules was probably due to improved family income during the 1970s and 1980s and a preference for non-residential occasional labourers. The exceptional participation of women on the large farm is more complex. The women who worked there came from a poor

neighbourhood, but there were many other similar neighbourhoods where the women stayed home. It was the manager of the farm, rather than the women, who initiated the action. He was interested in reducing the number of non-local harvesters he had to hire. He maintained close ties with families in the neighbourhood, organised all-woman crews and paid them the same piece-rate as the men. I suspect that this innovative strategy had something to do with some past labour tension and distrust of outsiders, but I could not confirm it from discussions with male and female labourers. The manager explained it in terms of their availability, their efficiency and unique ability. Cost was also an issue since migrant labourers usually bid up the piece-rate and this farm was already paying one of the highest rates.

Another interesting problem was the farm-to-farm variation of piece-rates. Most of these variations were related to farm and ecological conditions that affected the productivity of the labourer. However, one of the largest coffee producers, with very efficient and productive coffee groves, managed to reduce labour costs by paying 7 per cent lower piece-rates and using fewer supervisors than in an equally well-managed large farm. It did so without affecting the productivity of labour (in fact, the productivity was slightly higher in the farm that paid the lower rates). Both farms were well regarded by labourers. The key variable was the one predicted by the risk-avoidance argument of the neoclassical models. The farm with the lower labour cost was located higher up, so that the harvesting season was more even and spread over a longer period of time. They were able to retain 25 per cent of their labour force all year round and did not need many migrant labourers. The second farm was at a lower altitude, hence had to deal with sharper seasonal changes in demand and could retain only 10 per cent of its labour force for most of the year. Furthermore, because of its size and the seasonality of the demand, it had to attract a greater number of migrants – 14 per cent more (Ortiz 2004). From discussion with labourers it was clear that the harvesters in the first farm accepted the lower rates because they valued lower seasonal income variations. The neoclassical explanation of risk avoidance was appropriate.

However, wage variations encountered during the post-harvest season did not reflect other benefits to labourers (Ortiz 1999). A closer examination of these variations made it clear that they were related to farmers' use of market power to avoid contractual bargaining. The farmer's strategy was to wait for job solicitation and avoided informing the applicant of hiring conditions. Labourers were guided only by general experience, but they did not know the number of weeks for which they were being hired (somewhere between one and four weeks) nor what the pay would be. Even if they had worked for the farmer before, they were unable to tell how much they were likely to earn, since rates also changed from month to month. Only labourers who had a close

relation to a farmer and were routinely called when needed could estimate length of employment and pay. It was also interesting to contrast the hiring encounter during the harvest with the encounter during the low-demand period. During the harvest, the labourer was demanding and the farmer informative. After the harvest, the labourer was robbed of his/her power and was left with a social norm dictated by his/her class position. As the labourers explained to me, it was not proper to ask for information. Market power during the harvest allowed them to bypass what was considered culturally and politically appropriate behaviour. However, farmers who took advantage of their post-harvest power had to confront the transaction cost associated with tense labour relations, shirking and slow pacing to stretch the employment period. In this case both market and social power biased the bargaining and lowered the wages but increased other transaction costs to farmers.

The Colombian and Californian case studies illustrate that we must not ignore how social and political power relations affect market interactions and contract choices. The problem is how best to represent power. Description of its manifestations is the approach used by most sociologists and anthropologists. Power manifests itself through unions, producers' associations, political alliances and links to government agencies. It also manifests itself in the organisational and regulatory structure of the market. It becomes apparent during collective bargaining, dispute resolutions and labour confrontations. Disruptive flows of information betray power controls.

Conclusion

As some of the case studies illustrate, economic actors are just as concerned with their social standing, their identity and autonomy as they are with maximising utility or income in the conventional sense. These concerns are reflected in their purchases, their search for jobs and their behaviour at the workplace. It is then that they encounter a politicised arena where they are constrained by their power to bargain and their social obligations. These realities in turn affect how they redefine their goals and identities (as in the case of the New Guinea miners or women contract workers in Mexico) or renegotiate market exchanges (as in the case of strawberry producers or coffee labourers). Individual decision makers straddle two supposedly separate spheres of action: the social world and the market world. Neither world can be reduced to an 'externality' if we want to evaluate the impact of policies, changes in values and social institutions on economic opportunities.

References

Alderman, H., L. Haddad and J. Hoddinott 1997. Policy issues and intrahousehold resource allocations: conclusions. In *Intrahousehold resource allocations in developing countries: models, methods and policy* (eds) L. Haddad, J. Hoddinott and H. Alderman. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Anderson, J.R. 1979. Perspective on models of uncertain decisions. In *Risk, uncertainty and agricultural development* (eds) J.A. Roumasset, J.-M. Boussard and I. Singh. New York: Agricultural Development Council.

Appadurai, A. 1991. Dietary improvisation in an agricultural economy. In *Diet and domestic life in society* (eds) A. Sharman, J. Theophano, K. Curtis and E. Messer. Philadelphia, Pa.: Temple University Press.

Bardhan, P. and C. Udry 1999. *Development microeconomics.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Barnum, H.N. and L. Squire 1979. *A model of an agricultural household: theory and evidence.* Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Becker, G. 1965. A theory of the allocation of time. *Economic Journal* 75: 493–517.

Becker, G. 1981. *A treatise of the family.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Benería, L. and M. Roldán 1987. *The crossroads of class and gender: industrial homework, subcontracting, and household dynamics in Mexico City.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Binswanger, H.P. 1980. Attitudes toward risk: experimental measurements in rural India. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* 62: 395–407.

Brush, S. 1977. *Mountain, field and family: the economy and ecology of an Andean Valley.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Brush, S. 1982. Traditional agricultural strategies in the hill lands of tropical America. *Culture and Agriculture* 18: 9–16.

Cancian, F. 1979. *The innovator's situation.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Cancian, F. 1980. Risk and uncertainty in agricultural decision making. In *Agricultural decision making: anthropological contributions to rural development* (ed.) P. Barlett. New York: Academic Press.

Carter, M. 1997. Environment, technology, and the social articulation of risk in West African agriculture. *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 45: 557–90.

Carter, M. and E.G. Katz 1997. Separate spheres and the conjugal contract: understanding the impact of gender-biased development. In *Intrahousehold resource allocations in developing countries: models, methods and policy* (eds) L. Haddad, J. Hoddinott and H. Alderman. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Chayanov, A.V. 1966. *On the theory of peasant economy* (eds) D. Thorner, B. Kerblay and R.E.F. Smith. Homewood, Ill.: American Economic Association by Irwin.

Dewalt, B.R. and K.M. Dewalt 1980. Stratification and decision making in the use of new agricultural technology. In *Agricultural decision making: anthropological contributions to rural development* (ed.) P. Barlett. New York: Academic Press.

Doss, C.R. 1996. Testing among models of intrahousehold resource allocation. *World Development* 24: 1597–609.

Duncan, T. 1997. Incomes, expenditures, and health outcomes: evidence on intrahousehold resource allocations. In *Intrahousehold resource allocations in developing countries: models, methods and policy* (eds) L. Haddad, J. Hoddinott and H. Alderman. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Durrenberger, E.P. 1984. Operationalizing Chayanov. In *Chayanov, peasants and economic anthropology* (ed.) E.P. Durrenberger. Orlando: Academic Press.

Ellis, F. 1988. *Peasant economics: farm households and agrarian development.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Folbres, N. 1997. Gender coalitions: extrafamilial influences in intrafamily inequalities. In *Intrahousehold resource allocations in developing countries: models, methods and policy* (eds) L. Haddad, J. Hoddinott and H. Alderman. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Gladwin, C.H. 1975. A model of the supply of smoked fish from Cape Coast to Kumasi. In *Formal methods in economic anthropology* (ed.) S. Plattner. Washington DC: American Anthropological Association.

Gladwin, C.H. 1979a. Cognitive strategies and adoption decisions: a case of nonadoption of an agronomic recommendation. *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 28: 155–73.

Gladwin, C.H. 1979b. Production functions and decision models: complementary models. *American Ethnologist* 6: 653–74.

Gladwin, C.H. 1980. A theory of real-life choice: applications to agricultural decisions. In *Agricultural decision making: anthropological contributions to rural development* (ed.) P. Barlett. New York: Academic Press.

Haddad, L., J. Hoddinott and H. Alderman (eds) 1997. *Intrahousehold resource allocations in developing countries: models, methods and policy*. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Hart, G. 1992. Imagined unities: construction of the 'household' in economic theory. In *Understanding economic process* (eds) S. Ortiz and S. Lees. Lanham, Md.: University Press of America.

Hayami, Y. and K. Otsuka 1993. *The economics of contract choice: an agrarian perspective*. Oxford: Clarendon.

Hoddinott, J., H. Alderman and L. Haddad 1997. Testing competing models of intrahousehold allocations. In *Intrahousehold resource allocations in developing countries: models, methods and policy* (eds) L. Haddad, J. Hoddinott and H. Alderman. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Jones, C.W. 1986. Intra-household bargaining in response to the introduction of new crops: a case study from north Cameroon. In *Understanding Africa's rural households and farming systems* (ed.) J.L. Mook. Boulder, Colo.: Westview.

Kahneman, D. and A. Tversky 1997. Prospect theory: an analysis of decisions under risk. *Econometrica* 47: 263–91.

Kahneman, D. and A. Tversky (eds) 2000. *Choices, values and frames.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lipton, M. 1968. The theory of the optimizing peasant. *Journal of Development Studies* 4: 327–51.

Low, A. 1986. On farm research and household economics. In *Understanding Africa's rural households and farming systems* (ed.) J.L. Mook. Boulder, Colo.: Westview.

Mayer, E. and M. Glave 1999. *Alguito para ganar* (a little something to earn): profit and losses in peasant economies. *American Ethnologist* 26: 344–69.

Mook, J.L. (ed.) 1986. *Understanding Africa's rural households and farming systems*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview.

Murray, C. 1981. *Families divided: the impact of migrant labour in Lesotho.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Orlove, B. and R. Godoy 1986. Sectorial fallowing system in the central Andes. *Journal of Ethnobiology* 6: 169–204.

Ortiz, S. 1973. *Uncertainties in peasant farming: a Colombian case*. London: Athlone.

Ortiz, S. 1999. *Harvesting coffee, bargaining wages: rural labor markets in Colombia, 1975–1990*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Ortiz, S. 2004. Bargaining wages and controlling performance. In *Anthropology of work* (Society for Economic Anthropology monograph 22) (eds) E.P. Durrenberger and J.E. Marti. Walnut Creek, Cal.: AltaMira Press.

Platteau, J.-P. 1991. Traditional systems of social security and hunger insurance: past achievements and modern challenges. In *Social security in developing countries* (eds) E. Ahmad, J.H. Drèze, P.J. Hills and A.K. Sen. Oxford: Clarendon.

Platteau, J.-P. 1995. A framework for the analysis of evolving patron–client ties in agrarian economies. *World Development* 23: 767–86.

Polier, N. 2000. Commoditization, cash, and kinship in post colonial Papua New Guinea. In *Commodities and globalization: anthropological perspectives* (eds) A. Haugerud, M.P. Stone and P.D. Little. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield.

Quinn, N. 1978. Do the Mfantse fish sellers estimate probabilities in their heads? *American Ethnologist* 5: 206–26.

Sahlins, M. 1972. *Stone age economics*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Scott, J. 1985. *Weapons of the weak: everyday forms of peasant resistance.* New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.

Selby, H.A., A.D. Murphy and S.A. Lorenzen 1990. *The Mexican urban household: organizing for self-defense*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Sen, A. 1977. Rational fools. *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 6: 317–44.

Sen, A. 1994. The formulation of rational choice. *American Economic Association Papers and Proceedings* 84: 385–90.
Shaner, W.W., P.F. Philipp and W.R. Schmehl 1982. *Farming systems research and development: guidelines for developing countries*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview.
Sharma, N. and J. Drèze 1996. Sharecropping in a North Indian Village. *Journal of Development Studies* 33: 1–39.
Solow, R.M. 1990. *The labour market as a social institution*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
Stark, O. 1992. Nonmarket transfers and altruism. In *Understanding economic process* (eds) S. Ortiz and S. Lees. Lanham, Md.: University Press of America.
Tannenbaum, N. 1984. The misuse of Chayanov. *American Anthropologist* 86: 927–42.
Turner II, B.L. and S.B. Brush 1987. *Comparative farming systems*. New York: Guilford Press.
Tversky, A. 1972. Elimination by aspects: a theory of choice. *Psychological Reviews* 79: 31–48.
Tversky, A. and D. Kahneman 1974. Judgement under uncertainty: heuristics and biases. *Science* 211 (4481): 453–58.
Vandeman, A.M., E. Sadoulet and A. de Janvry 1991. Labor contracting and the theory of contract choice in California agriculture. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* 67: 681–92.
Wells, M. 1984. The resurgence of sharecropping: historical anomaly or political strategy? *American Journal of Sociology* 90: 1–29.
Wells, M. 1996. *Strawberry fields: politics, class, and work in California agriculture*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

5 Provisioning

Susana Narotzky

This chapter is about the different forms that provisioning for goods and services can take. Often provisioning is through the market, but in many cases the market is involved only partially, or not at all. Generally, in any society there are several possible paths for the provision of similar goods or services, as when medical care is available from the state, private practitioners, private corporations or a doctor friend. This situation might mean a wider choice for the consumer, or it might express social differentiation and limited access regarding a basic good such as health care. I want to stress the fact that provisioning is a complex process where production, distribution, appropriation and consumption relations all have to be taken into account and where history defines particular available paths for obtaining goods and services. Provisioning is also a useful way to understand social differentiation, the construction of particular meanings and identities and the reproduction of the social and economic system as a whole.

The provisioning perspective in its present form stems from the perceived need to link the consumption and the production ends of economic life in order to address vital issues such as food security, housing, health care, education and, more generally, public or collective consumption. Development agencies in the 1980s, and particularly anthropologists, economists and sociologists working for the Food and Agriculture Organization, made the link between food consumption and particular 'food paths' (Carloni 1981), which Boserup (1965) had highlighted in her work on the crucial role of women in subsistence agriculture and the disastrous effects for food security of development policies that targeted males for agricultural development. The food path is the different steps and agents involved in making food available to particular domestic groups and getting it to effectively nourish people in those groups. Things like access to land and other means of production (including credit), local 'traditional' knowledge regarding the environment and its use, distribution patterns and practices, and cultural views of appropriate food intake along age and gender divides were all discovered to be crucial in determining food security levels.

In the 1990s the provisioning approach was revised by Warde (1992) and Fine and Leopold (1993; also Fine 2002). They contributed useful tools of analysis through their theories about different 'modes of provision' (Warde 1992) and distinct 'systems of provisioning' (Fine 2002).

Provisioning, two examples

Anthropologists, like many social scientists, have increasingly concentrated on individual consumption decisions, and seen them as expressions of individual agency and identity. In focusing on what takes place at the consumption end of the provisioning process, they have often forgotten the economic and political forces that constrain people's consumption. Let me provide two examples that point out some of the important issues.

Child care

Imagine you need someone to take care of your children for a couple of hours a day, three days a week. How will you provide for it? Several possibilities come to mind immediately: (1) the government might have a day-care system that you can use, (2) there is an ample supply of private companies and self-employed people that will provide for babysitting at different market prices, (3) one of your relatives may be able to provide the care and (4) you may have friends or neighbours with whom you can organise a child-care pool system or a cooperative (Brandon 2000; Stack 1974).

Of these four possibilities, only (2) involves provisioning through the market. But even here, we do not choose freely among the available providers. Our decision will be shaped by our income, our willingness to trust strangers with our children, and our own and the babysitter's social network, which is how we are likely to learn about what child care is available. Equally, we cannot choose freely among other possible sources of child care. We may live too far from our relatives to make arrangements with them. We may have recently moved, and not have friends nearby or know how to gain access to neighbourhood child-care groups. We may live where there is no government child-care service, or live too far from that service to be able to use it.

Even if we were in a position to choose freely, our decision would be influenced by our judgement of the care provided, and that means our judgement of how it is produced. After all, not all child care is alike, and a child-care company's premises may look run-down and dirty, not suitable for our children. But also, our cultural understanding of how it is produced can be important. The facility may be neat and clean, but we may be put off by seeing that the staff are primarily from an ethnic group we do not trust. State child-care provision may be of good quality, but we may worry that it would make people think we are poor, or unwilling to spend money on 'proper' commercial child care.

Food

Let's say we are used to drinking coffee at breakfast, and we generally get it in the market. We can go to a supermarket and choose among the various brands, mostly blends of vaguely defined origin (Brazil, Colombia and so on)

traditionally catering to a mass market. Behind each brand there is an entire set of social relations of production and distribution that we can hardly follow. Generally, we cannot know how the particular relations involved in the production and distribution of that coffee affect the quality of the product. Also we are unaware of how our consumption contributes to particular forms of disempowerment and deprivation among the producers. The provisioning approach will help us discover a history of connections among economic, social and political forms of organising the coffee food path along different geographical locations (Jimenez 1995; Roseberry 1996; Stolcke 1984, 1988).

We may choose to go to a specialist 'independent' roaster where we trust that we get particular coffees produced in particular places that result in particular qualities and tastes. Our trust is based on the belief that the connection between distribution, retailing and production is more direct with such independent roasters, and thus control of the quality of the product at origin is possible. This type of outlet, in turn, caters to a presumably more sophisticated and knowledgeable consumer. We should bear in mind, however, that this form of provisioning is tied to technological innovations such as the use of containers that speed up transport and the use of computers for the control of stocks that dramatically shorten the time between production and final distribution, thereby increasing freshness. Marketing practices that define and target particular groups of consumers using identity and quality discourses are also involved in our decision to choose the independent roaster when getting our coffee (Roseberry 1996; Roseberry, Gudmundson and Samper Kutschbach 1995).

Increasingly we have yet another option for our coffee provisioning: Fair Trade. Through our coffee consumption practices we try to benefit particular forms of production, generally small producers who sell their coffee through Fair Trade cooperative systems (Whatmore and Thorne 1997). Fair Trade is based on enhancing the 'connectivity' of production and consumption agents' decisions as well as on marketing that connectivity as 'fair' and 'sustainable'. Although often the connection between both ends of the provisioning chain appears as linear and forthright, this is hardly the case. Decisions affecting production and sale are dependent on institutions such as the Cocoa, Sugar, Coffee Exchange in New York, which affects prices and sets the standard for fair trade agreements (Whatmore and Thorne 1997: 297).

On the other hand, the pressure for 'high quality' coffee justifying higher retail prices creates a pressure on farmers to change their practices. This generally means introducing organic forms of agriculture (more labour intensive) that meet the standards of certification of European Union legislation. The 'quality' factor, however, is a tricky one that often will push producers away from the Fair Trade network and back into more conventional

commercial channels and the uncertainties that affect them (Whatmore and Thorne 1997: 299).

Thus, along the provisioning path of Fair Trade coffee, actors have different capacities to decide about the values they can produce, exchange and consume, and about the social relationships associated with their different choices. As consumers, our ability to select one or the other way of getting our coffee will depend on our income, outlet convenience, general information of the different options available and ideological positioning. It will depend as well on the production relations at origin, on the systems of distribution and commercialisation, the coffee market and technological innovation. These various factors will affect not just the quality, price and circulation of the object, but also its meaning for us and our willingness and ability to buy it.

The provisioning approach

Goods and services such as food, clothes, water, shelter, sanitation, electricity, care and the like appear different and are materially different according to the social relations that have been involved in their production, distribution, circulation and consumption. The provisioning approach follows the path of provisioning in order to understand how the content and the meaning of goods and services are produced and how, in turn, they produce social differentiation. It also pays attention to factors such as income availability and its form (for example, cash, credit), which are significant and differentiating links throughout the various stages of the chain of provisioning. Sharing and pooling systems among individuals embedded in long-term reciprocal relationships such as those obtained in the domestic group, peer groups, informal credit circles, neighbourhoods, interest groups and the like are also important and need to be taken into account.

An aspect of this perspective is that it takes into account the simultaneous provisioning of particular goods through different paths – market, state, community, domestic group – and the articulation of market and non-market regimes along each path. Indeed, most goods shift through different phases along their path and most goods and services can be obtained through market and non-market ways. The interaction between these factors will affect both the symbolic and the economic value of the goods and services available in a society. More and more, this means paying attention to globalised processes of production and circulation not only of material objects but also of people and values.

The state is often a determining factor regarding the orientation of social actors towards more or less market-led processes of provisioning. This is salient in the provisioning of public services such as caring facilities, for example. Systems of provisioning are historically grounded and power, the capacity that people or institutions have to make decisions that affect others'

livelihoods, is a crucial element in the shifts and articulations along the chains of provisioning.

This approach also emphasises the political character of the production of meaning along these paths. It stresses the unequal power to create and institute particular meanings as cultural values that have wide impact. Moreover, the differential attribution of meaning and value to goods and services appears as a salient motive for discriminating among people, based on their consumption habits. This highlights the complexity and ambivalence of the meanings incorporated in goods and available to social actors as raw materials for their identity construction through consumption practices. It also stresses the relationship between the production of meaning and systems of exploitation and domination.

Table 5.1 Modes of provision, social relations and axes of meaning

Mode	Motivation	Relationship	Identity
Market	Interest	Exchange	Client, buyer
State	Justice	Civil right	Citizen
Community	Solidarity	Balanced reciprocity	Neighbour
Domestic group	Love	Generalised reciprocity	Family, kin

Source: Adapted from Edgell and Hetherington 1996; Warde 1992.

Table 5.1 is an attempt to abstract the elements that, in Western societies, interact in a particular mode of provision. Following a Weberian tradition, we might interpret these modes as ranging from the 'natural' (domestic group) to the 'social' (market) forms of relation or from emotion to reason as motivators for action. However, we should be aware that this intellectual tradition has developed historically in the context of particular political and economic transformations that had particular results in the psychology of motivation, the social production of mutual responsibility, the interpretation of experience and the construction of identity.

When thinking of actual practices of provisioning it is often useful to think of social actors as enmeshed in networks of provisioning. Carol Stack, in her classic *All our kin* (1974), gives a telling example in her description of strategies of survival in a black neighbourhood in the United States. She speaks of 'domestic networks' instead of 'domestic groups', in order to show the fluidity of the social relations that surround the provisioning and final consumption of subsistence needs such as food, shelter, clothing and care. Moreover, each path of provisioning is forged through a complex network of

social relationships that branch at the points where certain options become impossible or improbable for certain social actors and where, generally, tensions and power are concentrated and differentiation takes place.

From what I have said thus far, it should be clear that the provisioning approach can be summarised in terms of the following points.

First, different paths for obtaining goods and services are possible, using diverse modes of provisioning (market, state, community, domestic group). People will have different opportunities regarding their access to the various paths, opportunities that may shift at certain stages along the chain and at different points in the life cycle of the individual or the domestic group involved.

Second, different people or groups will be positioned differently as to their general ability to use market paths, as distinct from non-market paths (state, community, kinship).

Third, concerning non-market provisioning, people have different abilities to use institutionalised formal provisioning (unemployment aid, pensions, welfare, non-government organisation (NGO) help) and informal provisioning (kin networks, ethnic ties, religious affinities, political ideology, shared location of origin, and so on). Illegal immigrants in Europe, for example, do not have the same access as regular citizens to state welfare provision but have often better access to community-organised services through NGOs or religious charities. Even with extreme informal provisioning (for example, urban foraging practices such as garbage collecting, begging, petty theft and so on) not everyone has the same opportunity of access.

Following the provisioning paths

There is an increasing interest in consumption in anthropology. We seem to think that consumption patterns can tell us more about contemporary social relations (social differentiation, identity construction, agency, power) than production patterns. Often the argument is that empowerment can only come from consumption practices, as a precarious and segmented labour market and flexible and informal production processes have rendered empowerment in the workplace obsolete (Miller 1987, 1995). Consumption seems to address both material needs and the production of meaning. Much of this emphasis is linked to the stress on ‘agency’ and on individual autonomy or self-construction in Western societies, where social scientists have perceived a de-institutionalisation of social action. From this perspective, traditional corporate identity frameworks (for example, the family or class-based interaction through long-term employment patterns and union organisations) have given way to a ‘freer’, ‘disentangled’, ‘flexible’ individual who constructs her or his own identity through consumption choices about and with ‘meaning’.

As Carrier and Heyman (1997: 361) have put it:

> Such an approach ignores the fact that the people who confront, use and respond to objects and their meanings do so in terms of the material, social and cultural constraints of their own personal situations. The ways in which people respond to and use meanings have material, social and cultural consequences for themselves and for those meanings.

However, we need to go further than this. We cannot understand patterns of consumption, social relations in consumption or the construction of social meaning and forms of distinction and differentiation through consumption, if we do not address the complexity of the systems of provisioning as a whole.

It is important to consider the social relations that exist from production through distribution, appropriation and final consumption, for these are important in themselves and because they affect options at the next stage in the chain. We can see this importance in subsistence self-provisioning of food through forest products. In most regions that consume forest products, alternative paths of food provisioning exist, whether local peasant markets or agribusiness-led expanding markets for foreign goods. However, forest self-provisioning is still important for many people and enhances their food security. Nevertheless, there seems to be a declining trend in forest food consumption. Although changing tastes may have an influence, the most important factors seem to be linked to economic and political transformations. Some of these illustrate the complexities of provisioning networks: international food aid intervention, expanding distribution channels of agribusiness firms, privatisation of formerly common land, forest degradation through overexploitation for non-food purposes or commercial farming, loss of traditional resource and management knowledge (Falconer 1990–91). The social relations in these various factors will create particular topographies of food provisioning, as people deal with the options at hand from within their (and their household's) position in the economic and political structure.

The task of analysing paths of provisioning benefits from two important perspectives coming from the work of anthropologists. Both can be helpful in different ways to the understanding of provisioning processes.

Political economy perspectives

The political economy perspective developed through the 1970s and 1980s (Roseberry 1988) in anthropology, elaborating dependency and world-system theories. One important work here is Eric Wolf's *Europe and the people without history* (1982), which provides a detailed analysis of the connections and developments between world regions that affected the livelihoods of local people who are involved in producing, distributing and consuming particular goods. His example of the fur trade (1982: 158–94) is a masterful account of

the intricacies of the multiple and interacting paths of provisioning forming the system of provisioning of fur. He shows how social relations in the production and distribution stages of fur provisioning (in Russia, North America and western Europe) created goods that circulated along unevenly-commodified paths. At the same time, Wolf shows how the changing position of native American groups in fur provisioning affected their own patterns of consumption and provisioning for food, tools and weapons.

Another important work in this perspective is Sidney Mintz's *Sweetness and power* (1985). He shows how a particular production system, the plantation system, transformed the availability of sugar and changed its meaning from a rare luxury item into a common necessity. He also shows how the expansion of this particular consumption good was related to industrialisation in England, for sugar was a cheap nutrient that could be produced in the colonies at very low cost, and so helped reduce the cost of reproducing the English labour force. At many points in the provisioning chain, access to sugar and the desire to get it were forged differently for different groups of people.[1] And he argues that the desire for sugar, like its supply, was effectively beyond the control of many of its consumers.

> The uses to which it was put and its place in the diet changed and proliferated; it grew more important in people's consciousness, in family budgets, and in the economic, social, and political life of the nation … These changes have to do with 'outside' meaning – the place of sucrose in the history of colonies, commerce, political intrigue, the making of policy and law – but they have to do with 'inside' meaning as well, because the meaning people gave to sugar arose under conditions prescribed or determined not so much by the consumers as by those who made the product available. (1985: 167)

And what he has to say about that 'outside' meaning illustrates the complex ways that power and interest can shape a provisioning chain.

> The political and economic influence of the governing strata set the terms by which increasing quantities of sugar and like commodities became available throughout English society. This influence took the form of specific legislative initiatives affecting duties and tariffs, or the purchase of supplies of sugar, molasses and rum for dispensing through government agencies, like the navy and the almshouses; or regulations affecting matters of purity, standards of quality, etc. But it also involved the informal exercise of power: a combination of official prerogatives with the use of pressures made possible through cliques, family connections, university and public-school contracts, covert coercion, friendship, club membership, the strategic application of wealth, job promises, cajolery and much else. (1985: 171)

His analysis points to the dangers in stressing consumption and consumer choice as a key point of entry in our efforts to understand societies. 'The proclaimed freedom to choose meant freedom only within a range of

possibilities laid down by forces over which those who were, supposedly, freely choosing exercised no control at all' (Mintz 1985: 183).

Transactional and cultural perspectives

The second perspective is framed in transactional and cultural terms. In his introduction to *The social life of things*, Arjun Appadurai points out that while some objects 'make only *one* journey from production to consumption' (Appadurai 1986: 23; original emphasis), others can follow paths that take them in and out of commodity status, being consumed many times over in different forms in different cultural contexts by different people (see also Kopytoff 1986: 73–7; more generally, see Godelier 1996). For Appadurai (1986: 34–6), the value of such an object thus depends both on its individual 'cultural biography', its movement and 'life history', and on its 'social history', which can be traced for classes of objects in a society and which creates the large-scale dynamics that constrain the 'intimate trajectories' of things.

An important part of Appadurai's perspective is its concern with people's understandings of the commodity as it moves along its path, and how these contribute to the value of the commodity in particular exchanges. He notes that such understandings are common in all societies, but that they 'acquire especially intense, new, and striking qualities when the spatial, cognitive or institutional distances between production, distribution, and consumption are great … The institutionalised divorce (in knowledge, interest, and role) between persons involved in various aspects of the flow of commodities generated specialised mythologies' (Appadurai 1986: 48). And he divides these mythologies into three sorts:

> (1) Mythologies produced by traders and speculators who are largely indifferent to both the production origins and the consumption destination of commodities … (2) Mythologies produced by consumers (or potential consumers) alienated from the production and distribution process of key commodities … and (3) mythologies produced by workers in the production process who are completely divorced from the distribution and consumption logics of the commodities they produce. (1986: 48)

The intersection of these mythologies as the object moves along the provisioning path shapes the value of the object all along the way. The example of the construction of authenticity of oriental carpets described by Spooner (1986) in the same volume is particularly telling in this regard.

Connecting paths of provision with processes of power

Systems of domination are linked to the processes of provisioning both locally and in their wider articulation and interaction with other systems of

domination.[2] Consequently, understanding provisioning requires addressing how the various stages of the process are institutionalised through the state, law, custom, religious practice and other pertinent structures of domination. The degree of institutionalisation in turn will affect the effective availability of objects for, and decision-making possibilities of, particular social groups.

Geographers have produced extremely provocative work in this regard concerning collective consumption issues regarding public goods and the institutionalisation of their provision in welfare systems of different sorts (Harvey 1973; Pinch 1989). They have shown how the spatial location of public goods (for example, water pipes, sewerage infrastructure, electricity cabling, road and railroad systems, hospitals, schools, parks) is crucial for generating differences in consumption. The political aspect of this differentiation is apparent in the direct provision of public goods and services. The political aspect is no less important when certain uses of public resources are banned. Thus, Mitchell (1997) has analysed the effect of laws that prohibit the use of public space (sidewalks, subways, hydrants, public fountains) for private activities such as sleeping, washing or eating. These laws penalise those who have been made homeless because of the restructuring processes of capital (unemployment) and the shrinking and changing nature of welfare, and hence who lack 'private' (home) or 'public' (welfare provision) spaces they can use. They favour an aestheticised urban landscape that enhances 'gentrification', capital investment and speculation.

The increased awareness of environmental issues together with the political saliency of public-goods provision has further stressed the need to view the *entire* provisioning process, including the 'after consumption' stage of waste disposal. The disposal of toxic, domestic and industrial waste, and the involuntary consumption of the negative consequences of industrial production and compulsive overconsumption have all been addressed in different ways by state agencies, political activists, academic analysts and grassroots movements. Some have stressed the need to increase local participation in decisions about the location of waste landfills or toxic dumps, pointing to discriminatory policies that result in the inequitable distribution of pollution, of the negative externalities of the production and consumption process. Others stress the need to strengthen channels for public participation in decisions about the production process itself; that is, the origin of negative externalities in production: 'Pollution prevention ultimately requires production control' (Heinman 1996: 113). This perspective allows the extension of the provisioning approach, with its concern with power, into new areas. As Lake (1996: 169) has asserted: 'Both the inequitable distribution of environmental burdens and the inequitable production of those burdens arise from the unequal power relations controlling the organization of production in capitalist societies'.

The connection between systems of power and systems of provisioning is a crucial aspect of the mode of governance of any particular society. One aspect of this is people's agency, which is shaped by systems of provisioning, systems of power and systems of meaning that affect people in different ways. This shaping of agency is what Pierre Bourdieu termed 'habitus' and is a key element in the processes of social reproduction of the material and power structures in any society (Bourdieu 1979).

In sum, we get three dialectically-intertwined axes from the provisioning perspective: power, meaning and material provisioning, illustrated in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2 The dialectics of provisioning

THINGS: Provisioning System	POWER: Domination System	MEANING: Cultural System
Technology	Institutions	Mutual responsibility
Production relations	Differentiation	Presentation of self
Distribution (allocation)	Coercion	Forms of belonging
Circulation (movement)	Consent	Identity construction

Distribution and circulation in the paths of provisioning

Distribution describes the process by which things produced get to the hands of consumers, and it is a central aspect of the provisioning perspective. Except in the case of completely autonomous self-provisioning, distribution requires movement and allocation. Commonly this movement and allocation is through market systems, and in theory these systems are governed by supply and demand free from political or social constraints. In practice, however, often this freedom is absent. If we consider the different modes of provision possible at every stage of a particular path, we can see that allocation is, in important ways, both politically conditioned and socially embedded in multiple and complex social relations (for example, Carrier 1995; Miller 1997).

The economics of the movement of goods and services through particular distribution channels and retailing outlets is in itself a major way in which the process of differentiation in provisioning takes place. Movement in distribution seeks to bridge the space and time between the when and where of production on the one hand, and on the other the when and where of final consumption. This bridging can take place in different ways. In the market fairs of medieval Europe, producers and consumers moved to a privileged space of encounter, and this is still the case for commercial fairs. With local artisanal products (for example, food, pottery, cloth) and with exotic tourist

goods, the consumer may move toward the producer. However, often, a complex chain of intermediaries completes the movements required in a path of provisioning.

Issues such as the available technologies of storage and preservation, transport and the like are significant influences on distribution and circulation, and will affect what is available to consumers at the retailing end. The state can be significant here, not only through things like health and safety regulation, but also because the state sets the criteria by which alternative, public distribution processes are available to particular groups of people. Other distribution processes outside of markets exist in communal or kin-oriented provisioning along complex paths that are affected by things like domestic or local networks, cultural patterns of mutual responsibility and the position in the production system of network members. And for those members, as for others in the network, a member's wealth can be important: having work or a car can determine participation in distribution processes.

Thus, while the market may be the most visible, in every society alternative forms of distribution for goods and services exist. A number of factors influence just which of these forms of distribution people will use in their own provisioning. One of these factors is the degree of regulation of the chain of provisioning: the forms of control and regulation of the various distribution channels (market and non-market, formal and informal) and of the various sites of transaction with consumers. In Western societies, institutional control by the state and by producers' and consumers' associations, together with media that expose breaches in the system of regulation, help create trust in the formal market and state-led systems of provisioning. In the more informal, non-market paths, however, control is produced through networks of trust, based on first-hand knowledge of the nature and origin of the goods or service and of the person distributing it at each stage.

In his analysis of the transformations of circulation relations in Western countries, Carrier (1995: 61–105) shows that there was a growing impersonality in the social relations of retail trade, which 'affected people's experience with objects' (1995: 104). Thus, during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries a double alienation of people from objects occurred. People became alienated as producers, who did not own the means of production, and as consumers, who were increasingly separated from the personal, trust relationship that existed between customer and shopkeeper.[3] And it is worth noting that changes in final distribution in the retail trade often were induced by economic strategies at the stage of production, (for example, manufacturers pre-selling to the customer through creating and advertising branded goods).

Provisioning crises, such as cases of large-scale food poisoning or impurity, are leading consumers to lose confidence in the formal means of controlling

the paths of provisioning, as is a growing awareness of the conflicting interests of those holding institutional power in regulatory agencies and the like. The 'mad cow' (bovine spongiform encephalopathy: BSE) disease panic, for example, was not a scandal only because of the accumulated errors in the formal control of the system of provisioning. It was a scandal also because government officials, apparently wanting to protect important commercial and political interests, withheld crucial information for a long time, putting people's health at risk and impeding informed decision making. One reaction by commercial organisations to this loss of trust has been to present their wares in ways that satisfy consumers of the soundness of the entire path of provisioning. This is done mainly for food, illustrated by the spread of 'Fair Trade' products, but increasingly is done for more virtual goods, such as investment vehicles, as with the advertising of 'ethical' funds.

A second factor influencing people's use of any given form of distribution is their ability to know about and take advantage of it. A range of issues are important here, and I shall mention some of them briefly. The most obvious issue is people's income. The amount of their income influences what they can buy in the commercial sector and their access to welfare systems. As well, though, the way that they earn their income can affect their ability to participate in informal social provisioning networks. Another issue here is people's knowledge of alternative provisioning paths and products, special sales and retail outlets and the like. This knowledge in turn is shaped by their level of literacy; not just literacy in the conventional sense, but also electronic literacy, the ability to use computer resources to gain pertinent knowledge. A third issue is people's health and physical condition. This affects their movement, and hence the provisioning channels they can use, as well as their ability to gather pertinent information, which can be hindered by an impairment of their sight or hearing. Particular groups of people are strongly affected by this: elderly people, pregnant women, the chronically ill and the disabled. The final issue I shall mention is people's domestic equipment, the resources that allow them to acquire, store and process goods and services to provision their household. Having access to electricity, water and telephone services is important, as is the ownership of a refrigerator, freezer, automobile, storage space and the like, as well as the time necessary to acquire, store and process those goods and services.

Conclusion

As I have presented it here, a concern with provisioning has some important attributes. First and foremost, it integrates many of the different aspects of people's lives. Often our experience is fragmented and partial, based on the separate parts of the entire provisioning process as we experience them in our work, when we shop and when we consume. A concern with provisioning

encourages us to see the connections between these individual parts, see how they form the complex paths of social relations that are necessary to make goods and services available. By joining this integrated view with the ways that power and meaning affect the provisioning process, we are better equipped to understand what leads different people to acquire different goods and services through different channels, and how meaning is produced along the different paths available.

Second, the provisioning approach highlights the importance of the institutions that regulate flows of goods and services: the state (both as regulator and as welfare provider), the market, the neighbourhood, the family. The play between the different institutions involved in provisioning and the informal provisioning paths that emerge (especially in crisis situations) is important for understanding how people provide for themselves and others, and for understanding the social meaning of different provisioning paths.

Finally, this approach encourages us to understand the significance of historical forces in shaping our economic lives. The complex connections and processes of differentiation in provisioning that are simultaneously material, political and cultural are a product of the intersections of regional and global histories, and of the capabilities for action that are opened or closed to different social agents. While this is often recognised for the production, distribution and consumption aspects of provision when analysed as distinct realms of economic activities, it is rarely taken into account when envisaging the entire provisioning process.

In describing the provisioning approach in this chapter, I have stressed the material paths of the production of meaning in the goods and services that different people consume. The market-exchange model has made us think of consumables mainly as commodities, detached from the social relations that surround their production; that is, as separated from the power and meaning involved in the process of making them available. However, if we focus on the entire process of making goods and services available, we can see how the different social relations existing at the different stages of the process, in different locations and historical moments, are crucial to the understanding of who gets what, and what the things, the getting and the people all mean.

Notes

1. See also Schneider (1978) for an early anthropological linking of the consumption of particular types of cloth in Europe to the historical development of economic and political processes both at the regional and global levels.
2. Addressing this topic entails addressing the ways that systems of credit and finance, and systems for generating and distributing information are shaped by systems of domination and so restrict the access of some sorts of people rather than others.
3. If ‘commodity fetishism’ is an appropriate metaphor that Karl Marx used to highlight alienation in production, it is also a useful metaphor to stress alienation in distribution processes, where the decreasing involvement of human actors in trade, mainly retailing,

increases the appearance that objects can be abstracted from the social relations that make them available, and even 'have a life of their own'.

References

Appadurai, A. 1986. Introduction: commodities and the politics of value. In *The social life of things: commodities in cultural perspective* (ed.) A. Appadurai. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Boserup, E. 1965. *The conditions of agricultural growth*, Chicago: Aldine.

Bourdieu, P. 1979. *La Distinction*. Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit. (Published in English as *Distinction: a social critique of the judgement of taste*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984.)

Brandon, P.D. 2000. An analysis of kin-provided child care in the context of intrafamily exchanges: linking components of family support for parents raising young children. *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 2: 191–216.

Carloni, A.S. 1981. Sex disparities in the distribution of food within rural households. *Food Nutrition* 7: 3-12.

Carrier, J.G. 1995. *Gifts and commodities: exchange and Western capitalism since 1700*. London: Routledge.

Carrier, J.G. and J. McC. Heyman 1997. Consumption and political economy. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* (n.s.) 3: 355–73.

Edgell, S. and K. Hetherington 1996. Introduction: consumption matters. In *Consumption matters: the production and experience of consumption* (eds) S. Edgell, K. Hetherington and A. Warde. Oxford: Blackwell and the Sociological Review.

Falconer, J. 1990–91. 'Hungry season' food from the forests. *Unasylva* 41 (160). www.fao.org/docrep/t7750e/t7750e03.htm.

Fine, B. 2002. *The world of consumption: the material and cultural revisited*. (2nd ed.) London: Routledge.

Fine, B. and E. Leopold 1993. *The world of consumption*. London: Routledge.

Godelier, M. 1996. *L'Énigme du don*. Paris: Fayard. (Published in English as *The enigma of the gift*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998.)

Harvey, D. 1973. *Social justice and the city*. London: Edward Arnold.

Heinman, M.K. 1996. Race, waste and class: new perspectives on environmental justice. *Antipode* 28: 111–21.

Jimenez, M.F. 1995. 'From plantation to cup': coffee and capitalism in the United States, 1830–1930. In *Coffee, society, and power in Latin America* (eds) W. Roseberry, L. Gudmundson and M. Samper Kutschbach. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Kopytoff, I. 1986. The cultural biography of things: commoditization as process. In *The social life of things: commodities in cultural perspective* (ed.) A. Appadurai. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lake, R.W. 1996. Volunteers, NIMBYs, and environmental justice: dilemmas of democratic practice. *Antipode* 28: 160–74.

Miller, D. 1987. *Material culture and mass consumption*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Miller, D. 1995. Consumption as the vanguard of history. A polemic by way of an introduction. In *Acknowledging consumption* (ed.) D. Miller. London: Routledge.

Miller, D. 1997. *Capitalism: an ethnographic approach*. Oxford: Berg.

Mintz, S. 1985. *Sweetness and power: the place of sugar in modern history*. New York: Penguin.

Mitchell, D. 1997. The annihilation of space by law: the roots and implications of anti-homeless laws in the United States. *Antipode* 29: 303–35.

Pinch, S. 1989. Collective consumption. In *The power of geography: how territory shapes social life* (eds) J. Wolch and M. Dear. Boston, Mass.: Unwin Hyman.

Roseberry, W. 1988. Political economy. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 17: 161–85.

Roseberry, W. 1996. The rise of yuppie coffees and the reimagination of class in the United States. *American Anthropologist* 98: 762–75.

Roseberry, W., L. Gudmundson and M. Samper Kutschbach (eds) 1995. *Coffee, society, and power in Latin America*. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Schneider, J. 1978. Peacocks and penguins: the political economy of European cloth and colors. *American Ethnologist* 5: 413–48.
Spooner, B. 1986. Weavers and dealers: the authenticity of an oriental carpet. In *The social life of things: commodities in cultural perspective* (ed.) A. Appadurai. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Stack, C. 1974. *All our kin: strategies for survival in a black community*. New York: Harper & Row.
Stolcke, V. 1984. The exploitation of family morality: labor systems and family structure on Sao Paulo coffee plantations, 1850–1979. In *Kinship ideology and practice in Latin America* (ed.) R.T. Smith. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
Stolcke, V. 1988. *Coffee planters, workers and wives: class conflict and gender relations on Sao Paulo plantations, 1850–1890*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
Warde, A. 1992. Notes on the relationship between production and consumption. In *Consumption and class: divisions and change* (eds) R. Burrows and C. Marsh. London: Macmillan and the British Sociological Association.
Whatmore, S. and L. Thorne 1997. Nourishing networks: alternative geographies of food. In *Globalising food: agrarian questions and global restructuring* (eds) D. Goodman and M. Watts. London: Routledge.
Wolf, E.R. 1982. *Europe and the people without history*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

6 Community and economy: economy's base

Stephen Gudeman

An economy's base is the social and material space that a community or association of people make in the world. Comprising shared material interests, it connects members of a group to one another, and is part of all economies. The base of a community changes over time and assumes many forms that vary by history and context. But it is not represented in economic theories, and our ordinary language often does not bring it to everyday awareness. The term 'base', however, is used in parts of Latin America, and studies from other parts of the world provide many examples of its presence. By twisting the lens on economic processes, we may help reveal the significance of the base, which underlies all economies and is connected to capital in market-dominated economies. But understanding the importance of the base, and the interwoven relation of community and markets, requires a broadened understanding of the sphere of economy.

Ethnographers have demonstrated for more than a century that in other historical and ethnographic societies, as well as industrial ones, economy includes more than markets or the market-like exchange of goods and services. From an anthropological perspective, economy covers the acquisition, production, transfer and use of things and services. For example, material things are produced and processed outside formal markets, and many transfers take place through practices such as social allotment and apportionment, inheritance, dowry, bridewealth, bloodwealth, indenture and reciprocity, each mode having a variety of expressions. Modern (especially neoclassical) economics focuses primarily on market transfers or competitive bidding to the exclusion of these processes, unless the logic of market trade is used to interpret non-market exchanges that have different moral and social parameters. For example, a neoclassical economist may model the formation of property rights and the initial acquisition of property as a way of avoiding negative externalities and providing a greater incentive to work and invest (Alchian and Demsetz 1973; Demsetz 1967); even social relationships, such as interactions within the family or firm, may be reduced to and modelled as the outcome of rational selections within constraints. Most economists, whether neoclassical, neoinstitutional or neoevolutionary, assume that the human is a rational and solitary agent. Acting under constraints, he/she selects goals and chooses means that maximise self-interest or welfare. This perspective on the human in society cuts against many anthropological

assumptions and raises questions about use of the economists' toolkit as a universal way of analysing economy.

In contrast to economists, anthropologists often assume that humans are connected or social beings who build and destroy relationships, and who communicate by language and material things. To be human means being a person socially constructed in mentality, communication and relationships with others. To act as a separated individual without social connections, as in impersonal market trade, is a practice taken only in relation to sociality and culture, on which it depends. But building an economics on this anthropological presumption requires a new set of conceptual tools. The implications of this argument for notions about alienation, property, development, modernisation and well-being, as well as how we conduct ourselves and justify other forms of economy, are considerable.

Two realms of economy

Economy contains two realms: that of community and that of market or impersonal trade (Gudeman 2001). Both are found in all economies, each has many variations, and the balance of the two varies over time and by person and situation. These two faces of economy are complexly intertwined, and the border between them is often indistinct.

By community I mean small groups, such as households, bands or tribal organisations, but also imagined groupings that may never meet yet hold some interests in common. Communities may be embedded one within another, overlap, and differ in importance, duration, interests and internal structure. Their borders may be firm or porous.

Communities are held together by shared interests that constitute their base; and networks of relationships, connecting people through the base, make up communities. These networks can be thick or thin sets of ties that vary in strength and importance: some ties are perceived as eternal, others are shorter-term alliances formed to face a common problem, promote an issue or confront a mutual enemy.[1] An eating club or alumni group that meets once a year, a monthly play-reading group or participants in a ritual performance that takes place once every ten years comprise a more attenuated set of connections. Productive arrangements formed around rights to a water-hole, to a reservoir, to an irrigation system or to a fishing pond – that comprise the base – are more intensively utilised and often involve a thick, frequently-used complex of local, kinship and work ties. Through such community connections, things are appropriated, created and possessed, which maintains the relationships. But communities are more and less linked to economic processes, and not all their performances are economic.

Markets, in contrast, revolve about impersonal trade although these exchanges may be mixed with communal ties, as in the case of trade partners

or open-ended contracts. In market trade, the relations between people, and between them and things, are contractual. Individual trades may be cool and impersonal, or surrounded by joking. Although trade may be modelled as an independent transaction, in practice it is surrounded by communities that enable it. Market spaces are contained within communal agreements, such as a peace pact, a threatening fetish or a legal organisation through which expectations about the conduct of others can be assured. Markets of all kinds, whether in a town square or the New York Stock Exchange, have shared rules. When trades take place within a local market, the rules may be tacit or customary, with an agreement sealed by a handshake. When markets are large with anonymous participants, the rules usually are more explicit and the agreements specified or written; shunning and personal sanctions work in a small market but not a large one.

Markets depend on communities or states for the formation and enforcement of rules of trade and informal agreements, or customs of trading and conducting business, such as 'transparent' accounting which, when occluded, may need to be legally enforced by the larger community. Sometimes the informal agreements that make a market work are so implicit as to escape attention. When the Enron Corporation and the Arthur Anderson accounting firm took part of the corporation's debt off its balance sheet and out of footnotes, in order to increase the company's profit and credit rating, and when these techniques were shown to be used by others, investors were shocked.[2] Enron investors lost money, but the larger market tremors had to do with the broken trust and lack of confidence in corporate adherence to the agreements that ensured transparency of operations. The corporate participants in these practices composed an 'insider' community in which the accounting practices had become common. The revelation that this non-transparent community of large corporations and accounting firms was secreted within the market was demoralising. One result was to make accounting practices more enforceable. Regulation was shifted, to a degree, from market participants to an external oversight board.

On the ground, the two economic realms of market and community differ in size, capacity to expand and rate of technological change, and they are institutionally manifested and intertwined. A house economy in Latin America or a compound group in Africa may attempt to maintain itself as a separate unit within a larger association, but it trades some goods with others; conversely, in market economies, many wage earners who purchase food and goods for their households also help sustain themselves by cooking and gardening, by caring for the young, old and infirm, by repairing their houses and by building their furniture and making their clothes. These activities have economic value as they manifest a persona and make a space in the world.

The dialectic of the community and market realms exists in all economies, even if not fully present in conscious thought or perhaps even denied in formal discourse. At times, the two realms are like one of those puzzle pictures in which a line drawing can be seen either as a duck or a rabbit but not both, or a picture can be seen as a vase or two opposite faces but not at the same time. We focus on one or the other but not the whole. Acts and things are seen now as part of community, now as separated in the market, depending on the framing; and they can be frozen or move unstably between the two, depending on the prevailing rhetoric, institutions and balance of power. For example, private property in the market can slip into being seen as part of a community's long-held resources, as when expensive jewellery is kept as a family heirloom: only with regret do we part with these items that connect us to others and provide a sense of identity.

The community realm offers security and a rampart against uncertainty, but it can be home to inequalities, the exercise of unconstrained power and exploitation. The market has proven to be a powerful solvent of community, because it breaks immutable bonds among people that are forged through material goods and services, and it permits and enforces a critique of unequal, if not inefficient, connections. Markets offer a space for making new connections to material things, services and others; for enjoying freedom, exploration and serendipity; for enhancing the standard of living, health and longevity; for degrading the environment; and for creating inequalities of wealth, poverty, malnutrition, the marginalising of humans, as well as solitude. Neither economic realm is inherently better than the other, apart from a social valuation; neither seems to nourish the full range of human capacities or to provide a space for their achievement. Each constitutes a partial critique of the other.

If today, in industrial societies, we favour one form over the other, we remain caught within our reasons. If we choose to strengthen or enact a community form – from breakaway communities within markets to national socialism to international communism – we choose material life through connections; but if we choose connections they become contracts. If we select rational choice as a way of life, the selection itself is a commitment that is a-rational. The certainty of having a base with others, as part of our being in the world, always tugs at us, as does the desire to transcend it.

The base

The community realm of economy features important economic processes, beginning with the construction, maintenance and alteration of its base. Consisting of entities that people appropriate, make, allocate and use in relation to one another, the base is locally and historically formed. In the Latin American countryside, a farmer considers as base his house, land and crops; a

university's base includes its library, laboratories, offices, communication systems and concepts linking researchers; in Cuba the education, health and retirement systems, jobs and some food provisions provided by the government as well as personal connections comprise the base. In Dalarna, Sweden, the financially successful artists Karl Larsson and Anders Zorn built their homes as working, living, personal display spaces – a rhetoric in the formation of their subjective identities; today, these houses stand as their exemplars of local community and cultural well-being.[3] But people share multiple bases, and in a global world participate in overlapping, proliferating, negotiated and changing bases.

The base everywhere consists of skills, knowledge and practices that are part of a changing heritage that is always necessary for market trade, from language to hand signs and from cognitive skills to values. The base includes parts of the material world as well as accumulations gained through productive use of resources, and a community may specify materials or activities that cannot be used or supported by it. Often, the base has central symbols, 'sacra', that signify its power and continuance. Above all, persons in a community are connected to one another through and in relation to the base that lends them an identity. I shall focus on the material, cognitive and behavioural expressions of the base, leaving aside the ways it is distributed or allocated, as well as the cultural stories that people construct which give historical justification to their appropriation of and relation to it.

Knowledge and skills

The base is a people's heritage of knowledge and skills, often developed in relation to the material space they occupy. For example, skilled navigators in Polynesia as well as Europe may use the night sky or ocean currents to orient themselves and guide their vessels; the weather or snow may be read to find animals by Arctic peoples as well as by sportspeople. This accumulated knowledge, transmitted through apprenticeship and explicit instruction, seemingly cannot be depleted, as in the economists' example of a shared lighthouse: one person's use does not detract from another's. Government-sponsored research, made freely available, increases the base of a nation or the world as does the internet, a library or a free university. The work of scholars, researchers, shamans and medicine men adds to the common heritage that expands as one contribution builds on another. By contrast, guilds and some trade unions, in which apprentices gain knowledge in hierarchical circumstances, build and pass on a base, but the skills are limited to the group as private property.

In the dynamic between community and market, base practices and knowledge may be privatised and turned to capital advantage. For example, folk medical knowledge, accreted over time and spread among a population,

may be 'mined' by pharmaceutical companies for hints to new remedies, and folk medicines may be analysed to extract agents for new drugs. This base is not lost, but it is used for profit often without recompense. When a university professor offers a free evening lecture, he/she adds to the base of knowledge and scholarship; when he/she gives the same lecture to a corporation (often without pay), the knowledge may be turned to private profit. Likewise, government-sponsored medical research at a university may be freely disseminated, then turned to private profit. The Linux operating system, whose source code is freely available, is a shared base that expands with applications. Microsoft's privatisation of a competing system forecloses this sharing and the potential for contributions from outside the corporation. The presence of a base may be so accepted that its contribution passes unrecognised: traditional tunes, for example, are often used in commercials. To suggest that its cars are sprightly and energetic, one automobile manufacturer shows its products on television cavorting and acting like children, which is one common image of youngsters in certain cultures. Market activity inevitably draws on an open heritage.

Unlimited base

A part of the material world may be used as if it were an unlimited base. Economists term this type of base an 'open access' commons, but their interpretation of it may situate it as an appendage of the market, may exclude the cultural and social skills necessary for using it, and may sever its connection to the person. This form of base may include a seemingly plentiful resource, such as air, the sky, an ocean, a sea or a forest. A community shares this space (sometimes with others) by its knowledge and use of it. A jungle may be used to hunt game, a forest may be used to lay trap lines that cross each other, plants may be freely collected from a savannah. Swidden farmers, as well as fishermen, may use their resource as if it were unlimited. In rural Panama, during the first half of the twentieth century, people in the central savannah journeyed to salt flats on the Pacific Ocean to extract their needed salt; the resource was plentiful, competition for access was unknown. Today, windmills used to power electric generators exemplify this form of base, provided that one user does not impinge on the wind of another. Using the ocean and the atmosphere as free spaces for dumping pollutants implies that they are an unlimited base, although today these actions are increasingly contested by some nations and transnational communities.

When population increases and the market realm expands, an unlimited base usually does not endure. In Sweden, by the law of 'everyman's right' (*allemansrätt*) one may cross or enter the property of another to enjoy nature, gather wild berries and mushrooms, or even camp overnight while taking care not to bother the owners or harm the domesticated plants.[4] Today, *allemansrätt*

is being severely strained in popular tourist areas of Sweden (and Norway, which has a similar right). Many tourists, who are unfamiliar with the legal and tactical rules of use, damage and overcrowd property, pass diseases such as tapeworm to livestock and pollute watersheds.

Limited base

The base may be a bounded resource (which economists identify as a restricted access commons; Ostrom 1990). The possession is circumscribed and held by a community in relation to others. Clan land or a village common are examples, as is the plot used by a household group to raise crops for consumption. This form of base may also consist of trap lines and hunting trails, or exclusive rights to salt flats as among the Baruya of New Guinea (Godelier 1977).

A limited base is allocated and apportioned by community rules, as in the case of rotating water rights in parts of the Andes. In Latin America also, land may be held by a religious association or co-fraternity that allocates parcels on the basis of group membership and service. In modern economies an extraordinarily large number of bases, and bases mixed with capital, are complexly allocated, such as public lands used for mineral extraction, museums, hunting areas, freshwater streams, forest preserves, game, fish and commons gardens (see, for example, Bollier 2002). Use is restricted to members of a community who often queue to pay a (usually small) fee for access, such as visiting a national park or fishing a river. A city or university library, to which one gains access as a taxpayer or student, is such a base as well.

A public, limited base may be leased for market use, often at a low rate. A government may assign or auction wave bands to private radio stations, and it may rent national range lands for pasturage, forests for exploitation, or mineral deposits for extraction, all for a small fee that subsidises profit making. The sky is freely used by aircraft with advertising banners, but a Russian space rocket rented signage (Bollier 2002: 159). In Sweden, many municipalities own garden land that is rented for a nominal fee to nearby residents. The allotment rule is first-come first-served, with the distribution overseen by a local committee consisting of community members who share an interest in working the soil and the values of solitude, silence and closeness to nature. In some areas, these plots are now occupied by people from ethnically diverse neighbourhoods, and their uses transform the traditional conception of this base by employing it for market activities. In one municipal garden of Stockholm, ‘Swedes’ (Europeans) raise flowers and garden for relaxation and quiet as they have long done. However, ‘Turks’ (Middle Easterners) plant kitchen vegetables, such as garlic and leeks. Their products help defray the cost of household food. ‘Chinese’ (East Asian) women plant greens and

harvest up to five times a year by using pesticides and fertilisers, and supply restaurants with their products. Each group, with rightful access to the land, uses it differently: for local pleasure or for its own sake; for local support or for the sake of saving money; and for the market or for the sake of making money. Within this space, members of the three groups sometimes resent and quarrel with one another, for they are using the land differently: as a base, as a mix of base and capital, and as subsidised capital. The culturally diverse groups, with differing positions in the larger society, build different economic communities in relation to the same base (Klein 1993).

When a base expands, it may affect the capital value of neighbouring private property and lead to conflict between the interests of a community and individuals within it. When airport noise increases due to runway expansion or a road is widened, adjacent property is affected. At what price should the owner of the property be compensated? (The opportunities for chicanery, or use of advance knowledge about base expansion, are often exploited for private advantage.) But does the indemnity for this 'basification' of private property ever mirror the size of the reverse flow, which is the price paid for 'debasement', such as the privatisation or market use of a shared base?

The shifting integration of base with capital affects the mutuality of a community, the subjectivity of its members and their well-being, because it alters connections between people and between them and their base, as well as altering their shared identity.

Material accumulations and services

A base may include material accumulations such as a stock of food, improved land, or tools and equipment that support present uses. In the uplands of Colombia, where household economies are found, a rural farmer considers his crops, work put into the land, house, stored food, animals and tools as his base. This part of the base supports garnering future returns for consumption and sale. Governments stockpile food, oil, gold and other resources. The United States holds armaments; Cuba keeps food caches in case of natural disasters. Some nations provide retirement payments for workers, milk for children and welfare for the impoverished. Communities also provide services, from universal education to health care, social services and job training, although these programmes are being curtailed and privatised in many countries. Almost everywhere, households keep stocks of food and clothing in varying amounts. Poverty, from this perspective, means having no base. Charitable organisations, such as Goodwill in the United States, that provide low-cost, second-hand goods, may help provision the bases of the less affluent, but the problem of lacking a base afflicts a very large number of people in the world, such as urban squatters.

Prohibited spaces

The base may define a space in which activities may not occur. A nature reserve keeps an area from market or communal exploitation. In some areas of Guatemala, communities protect their higher forest lands from exploitation to preserve the watershed for irrigating the lower agricultural plots on which domestic and market crops are grown. Regulations about automobile emissions and car safety set spaces that private property cannot encroach. Rules about workplace harassment and safety, limits on the use of child labour and hours of work, zoning laws, and restrictions on the use of pesticides on crops and food additives define spaces that cannot be used in the market and sometimes in the community. Regulations on logging in a national forest stipulate both legitimate and prohibited uses. These rules limit the degree to which the base may be used in the market as well as in the community. Stipulations that limit debasement contribute to communal well-being but are often contested.

Base as sacra

The base is sometimes epitomised as an essential or prototypical good or object on whose existence a community relies. In parts of Latin America, potatoes, maize or rice are considered to be a basic or life necessity; raised at home, the crop is eaten daily if not at every meal. In East and Southeast Asia, rice often serves the same purpose; millet and other crops are considered necessities in parts of Africa, and among the Nuer, milk and cattle blood are sources of bodily vitality (Hutchinson 1996). The sacral part of the base is usually preserved and reproduced each year to protect the continuity of the living community with its ancestors and potential descendants. Each household of the Iban in Sarawak plants a sacred strain of rice whose power grows with its perpetuation. This rice ensures the health of the other rice strains and the vitality of the household that consumes it. In the United States a basic, masculine meal used to consist of meat and potatoes; today this meal is consumed by everyone as hamburgers and french fries and it has been adopted in many parts of the globe. Other strength and identity foods in the United States that vitalise communal affiliation include hot dogs, mother's chicken soup, Easter ham and Passover lamb, depending on the community and occasion. A community's sacra may also include anthems or folk-songs, banners, flags, monuments, royal crowns, palaces, documents and buildings.

Base and the person

Through making and using the base, people affect, influence and communicate with one another, because it is a product and constituent of persons. The shared heritage lies outside the person as material resources and tools, and

within as ideas and practices that are transmitted through socialisation, formal and informal teaching, and learning by doing. Some parts of the material base emerge from intentional acts, such as the fabrication of tools, monuments or a cave drawing, and some are unintentional outcomes, as in the case of a footprint or the remaking of the landscape when a plant species is domesticated.

Through the base, a person is the product of others, who in turn are prior products of yet others, and so on in a historical series. Respect for the ancestors, their accomplishments and effect on contemporary life, whether manifested through lineage rituals or making a weekly visit and placing flowers in a Swedish graveyard, expresses this dependence on the past.

Most economists' models accord a central position to the isolated, individual decision maker who is connected to others only by the constraints they impose on what can serve as means in his/her utility function. But there are other, dramatically different constructions of the person. In the case of Melanesia, Marilyn Strathern observes that 'persons are as dividually as they are individually conceived'. By 'dividual', Strathern means that Melanesians are seen as divisible and porous or unbounded. She continues: 'Indeed, persons are frequently constructed as the plural and composite site of the relationships that produced them' (1988: 13).[5] The insight may be broadened: for one part, people are 'individuals' as abstracted in economists' models and in pure market trade; for the other, they are 'persons-in-community' when seen in relation to others and the base. The balance of the two visions and enactments depends on the society, situation and actor.[6]

Community identity is made up of connections forged through shared practices and conceptions, such as kinship, friendship and residence. For example, in rural Panama people claimed that one 'looked Panamanian' as a result of the rice, maize and beans that were grown in the same soil and eaten by everyone. People were alike for their shared sustenance from the land. In addition, the act of baptism created everlasting bonds between the godparents, the birth parents and the godchild. This spiritual or sacred tie could not be seen, but it had to be respected at all times. The bond connected people not as preformed units but constituted part of their personhood that was shared with others, especially in the case of the godchild, who did not become a full human (with rights to burial) until undergoing baptism and acquiring spiritual parents. The bond was recognised even at funerals, when the spiritual family prayed for the soul of the departed; and it was said that the first people to greet one in heaven were one's godparents and spiritual co-parents. In addition, kinship itself was formed by the acts of engendering and sharing blood, living together and eating common food. All these connections situated the person as a composite of relationships and as a repository of features from others that helped define personal identity in relation to that which they shared.[7]

The term 'base' in Panama referred especially to things held and acquired and to a person's agricultural and household skills, as well as the personal judgement and comportment that sustained the physical base. The personal qualities were a function of family 'breeding', in the double sense of rearing and ancestry. A person's base, both within and without, reflected the community within and from which she/he emerged. But the conceptualisation of the base in relation to connections between persons may shift. For example, in Cuba the physical resources that make up the physical base are held and distributed by the state; but with shortages, this connection is weakening. Some people say that 'base' now refers to the personal ties on which one relies for assistance. A person secures needed food, money or an automobile part through a friend or family members.

The dialectic of making and being composed by the base varies both across societies and with respect to its influence on subjectivity: are the ties with others worn lightly on the surface, as in the case of the community morality exhibited in the Enron scandal, or does the person embody a mix of ties with others that must be enacted and re-enacted, on ceremonial as well as material occasions, because what affects one person influences another?

Implications

The concept of two interacting realms of economy, or market and community, and the base may be added to the toolkit of economic anthropology. For example, the practice of 'redistribution', about which much has been written since Karl Polanyi (1944; see Isaac chap. 1 supra) is encompassed within the communal processes of allotment of the base and apportionment of flows from it. Reciprocity becomes a transfer of base that leads to communal inclusion in varying degrees, whereas autarky, always practised to a degree, signals communal autonomy. Transfers such as bridewealth or dowry are ways of rearranging the base and maintaining community, and they can be modes of gaining local power as well.

But this alternative model of economy has practical applications, too. With the discursive spread of modern economics, many practices to which anthropologists attend are being subsumed under rational actor theory, with its assumptions of ordered individual preferences, self-interest and maximisation under constraints. This model presumes that actions can be reduced to means (constraints and resources), ends (preferences or tastes) and efficiency relations of the two. Today, the hybrid concepts of 'human capital', 'social capital' and 'cultural capital' are used to explain the dynamics of economies as if an investment of financial capital could be rationally allocated among human skills, ideologies and relationships to increase the gross national product of an economy. These three concepts are abstractions from the social

and cultural foundations of economy. The anthropological concepts of community and its base open a space for critiquing and providing an alternative account of an economy's dynamics.

For example, to foster economic growth the International Monetary Fund loans money to nations but sets constraints on deficit spending and inflation, while imposing structural readjustment programmes. The World Bank seeks to meet basic needs and mount a 'war on poverty' by financing local projects within a nation. Both institutions assess projects and programmes by their rate of return. But the crucial developmental issue could be seen as helping people to build a base that in turn supports innovation, which is the key to material well-being. Founded on an economic anthropology framework, this sort of project will require new ways of thinking about 'development' and well-being, as well as local participation and discourse.

Parts of the environment, conceived as base, might be stipulated as lying outside the market arena. Instead of issuing limited rights to pollute that can be traded among corporations as market property, communities (as local groups, nations or transnational associations) may protect the environment by specifying actions and products as lying outside the market arena. These stipulations of what must remain as base or cannot be used within it will vary, but could include controls on logging, water uses, fishing, automobile safety and food purity. Nations and global organisations enact environmental standards today, but we lack a model of economy that justifies these constraints on the market and on the metaphoric spread of market discourses. We lack a model that addresses community and well-being as part of economy.

Finally, anthropologists have long addressed the notion of property by seeing it in terms of social connections rather than as just a relationship between person and thing. But we might explore further the concepts of alienability and commensuration in relation to the base. The base is 'property' in one sense of the term. But it is not market property, because it is connected to a community of people as part of their identity and legacy. It lies outside the realm of market logic. This notion of base possession is found in all economies as part of the intertwining of community and market. What does it mean for social identity when a family house, a personal handicraft item or even the first dollar earned is separated from its communal context and sold? Every sale, every purchase is a market act and, to some degree, a communal action that affects identity. What range of market and of community do people establish and wish to maintain? Studying and understanding the contours and justifications of this interaction, which is occurring around the globe, falls within economic anthropology for it is part of the dialectic of community and market. Enhancing a discussion of the issues might be seen as a new political economy.

Notes

1. Granovetter (1973) identifies networks as having strong and weak ties, and suggests that weak ties may lead to more rapid diffusion of information.
2. According to *Business Week* (28 January 2002, at www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/02_04/ 6376720.htm), the goal of 'hundreds of respected U.S. companies … is to skirt the rules of consolidation, the bedrock of the American financial reporting system and the source of much of its credibility'.
3. Karl Larsson, like Norman Rockwell in the United States, grew up in urban poverty. Both artists achieved market success by creating idyllic pictures of nurturant, thriving rural community life that for their compatriots became one meaning of the essence of 'Sweden' and 'America'. Both created nostalgic visions.
4. Dahl (1998) terms this right the 'Swedish Law of Commons'.
5. Referring to the Siane of Papua New Guinea, Strathern also observes: 'out of this composition of distinct elements persons emerge as hybrids of the human and non-human' (1999: 123; see also Strathern 1993). Her interesting conceptualisation of the Melanesian person partly draws on the work of Marcel Mauss (1985 [1938]).
6. Markus, Mullally and Kitayama (1997) might label these differing constructions of the person 'selfways'.
7. Carsten (2003) explores some of the ways 'the person' is composed by relationships in different cultures; I am indebted to her study that picks up themes raised by Strathern (1988) and others.

References

Alchian, A.A. and H. Demsetz 1973. The property rights paradigm. *Journal of Economic History* 23: 16–27.

Bollier, D. 2002. *Silent theft: the private plunder of our common wealth*. New York: Routledge.

Carsten, J. 2003. *After kinship*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dahl, G. 1998. Wildflowers, nationalism and the Swedish law of commons. *Worldviews: Environment, Culture, Religion* 2: 281–302.

Demsetz, H. 1967. Toward a theory of property rights. *American Economic Review* 57: 347–59.

Godelier, M. 1977. *Perspectives in Marxist anthropology*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Granovetter, M.S. 1973. The strength of weak ties. *American Journal of Sociology* 78: 1360–80.

Gudeman, S. 2001. *The anthropology of economy*, Malden, Mass.: Blackwell.

Hutchinson, S.E. 1996. *Nuer dilemmas*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Klein, B. 1993. Fences, fertilizers, and foreigners: moral dilemmas in the Swedish cultural landscape. *Journal of Folklore Research* 30: 45–59.

Markus, H., P. Mullally and S. Kitayama 1997. Selfways: diversity in modes of cultural participation. In *The conceptual self in context* (eds) U. Neissuer and D. Jopling. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Mauss, M. 1985 (1938). A category of the human mind: the notion of person; the notion of self. In *The category of the person* (eds) M. Carrithers, S. Collins and S. Lukes. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ostrom, E. 1990. *Governing the commons: the evolution of institutions for collective action*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Polanyi, K. 1944. *The great transformation*. New York: Farrat & Reinhart.

Strathern, M. 1988. *The gender of the gift: problems with women and problems with society in Melanesia*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Strathern, M. 1993. Entangled objects: detached metaphors. *Social Analysis* 34: 88–98.

Strathern, M. 1999. *Property, substance and effect: anthropological essays on persons and things*. London: Athlone.

PART II

ELEMENTS

Introduction

In the Introduction to the handbook I said that economic anthropologists generally see the economy as being the production, circulation and consumption of things. The chapters in Part II address different aspects of this sequence of activities. The part begins with a consideration of property, which is important in each of these stages. It then includes two chapters that deal with a central aspect of production, labour. Then follow two further related chapters, one on money and one on finance. This is followed by a consideration of forms of distribution, and then a consideration of forms of consumption. As is clear, this part does not address circulation as a distinct topic. This is because forms of circulation have long been a central concern of economic anthropologists, and indeed of anthropologists generally; so much so that the topic merits a part of its own, which follows this one.

7 Property

Chris Hann

One key element in the anthropologist's approach to property (as to other key concepts) is to 'relativise', to question whether the understanding that has emerged in our intellectual traditions can provide an adequate base for understanding others. The English term 'property' is closely tied to the history of enclosures and the emergence of capitalism. It may be misleading to conceive the complex, non-exclusive patterns of access and use characteristic of precapitalist land tenure in terms of property relations (Peters 1998). Close inspection of the concept reveals that currently dominant understandings, both academic and 'folk', are also a highly distorted representation of how contemporary Euro-American property systems function. Even those committed in principle to the comparative analysis of social institutions may hesitate to make use of a concept which cannot readily be translated 'one for one' even into a closely related language such as German. The problems of translation into more remote contexts, say Polynesia, are of course more formidable (Firth 1965 [1939]). The tension is particularly evident in a field such as economic anthropology, which for some of its practitioners implies a commitment to the generalisability of the toolkit of a powerful Western social science, while others vigorously contest the very possibility of such generalisation. How far can a word with a particular history and meanings in the English language be applied analytically in comparative work? If 'property' is somehow contaminated, is a more suitable term available? Peters (1998: 370) pleads for 'the old language of "rights"', yet this would seem open to similar objections.

Here it will be argued pragmatically that, in spite of difficulties, property has proved itself a useful term in economic anthropology. A good deal of conceptual precision has already been achieved, though there is always room for further theoretical clarification (Hunt 1998). Part of the problem is that theoretical knowledge built up earlier has not been consolidated or consistently implemented empirically. In our age the dominant sense of property has been a narrow one: the main focus has been on one particular form. The virtues of private property (that is, goods to which an individual or corporation has exclusive title) underpin most economic theorising about property in what I shall term the 'standard liberal model'. These academic models correspond to popular usage of property in contemporary English, which took shape in an era of capitalist 'possessive individualism'

(Macpherson 1962). But anthropologists have shown that the social significance of property is much broader than this, and both the social and the economic functions of property change, in close association with political dynamics. In the twenty-first century the ownership of a certain amount of private property is no longer a precondition for political citizenship, as it was in numerous European countries in the nineteenth. The ownership of land and other means of production no longer has the same decisive social or economic significance in mature industrial societies that it had in the age of John Locke and Karl Marx. Managerial power and access to information are in some respects more critical than ownership *per se*, and the broader approach to property relations will include an analysis of such changes. Similarly, entitlements to welfare benefits and social security may be considered as a new form of property, this time inclusive of all the citizens.

Anthropologists, then, have critiqued the narrow view of property and established its inadequacy even for the societies in which this reflects a dominant 'folk view'. We need a wider compass. But there is a danger in moving to the opposite pole and considering all rights or entitlements as forms of property. We may need to impose some restrictions on what we understand by property if the term is to retain its analytic use: if not, as Peters (1998) warns, the study of 'property relations' will become synonymous with that of social relations in general (compare Hann 1998).

After a preliminary discussion of theoretical work and some classical contributions dating back to the nineteenth century, when the prime focus was on evolution, I shall present examples to show that even societies furthest removed from the standard liberal model of property none the less have property systems in the broad anthropological sense. The discussion then focuses on a selection of contemporary themes. It does not aspire to be comprehensive, but merely to indicate a few of the main fields in which property research is currently flourishing. In conclusion I ask whether, after a century in which anthropology has been dominated by meticulous 'snapshot' ethnographies, the time might be ripe to return to earlier evolutionist agendas.

Bundles, hierarchies and layers: the theory and history of property in anthropology

Starting with the assertion that property relations are to be approached not as relations between persons and things but as social relations between persons with respect to things, theoretical work on property by anthropologists has drawn heavily on legal traditions. In particular, the image of property as a 'bundle of rights', first outlined by Henry Maine in *Ancient law* (1861), has influenced numerous later writers. It draws attention to the very common circumstance that different kinds of rights may be held in the same thing. Ownership, defined as the greatest possible combination of rights over a

valuable object which the law recognises, does not preclude the long-term allocation of use rights to another party and it need not imply the right to alienate. It is thus a more specific term than property, but it too is potentially available for use in cross-cultural analysis.

Early theorists of property in anthropology, notably Lewis Henry Morgan and, following him, Friedrich Engels (1972 [1884]), were primarily concerned to explain the evolution of human societies, culminating in the highly individualised private ownership characteristic of modern capitalism. This remains the impulse behind Marcel Mauss's study of *The gift* (1990 [1925]), in which the analysis of exchange was predicated upon transformations in the ways in which people relate to each other through things, in other words upon property. Like his predecessors, Mauss took as unproblematic the basic distinction between rights in *things* and the rights in *persons* that people held by virtue of belonging to specific social groups and political communities. Unfortunately, much twentieth-century work was bedevilled by the misleading simplicity of 'communal vs. individual', an either–or dichotomy sustained by a combination of persistent Western folk beliefs and Cold War ideologies, long after the fieldwork revolution associated with Bronislaw Malinowski should have consigned it to oblivion. Malinowski devoted the last of his monographs on the Trobriand Islanders (1935) to a study of their gardening practices. It was essential, he contended, to probe behind the 'legal façade' to grasp the underlying principles by which land was held and used. The ultimate basis was to be found in their matrilineal kinship organisation rather than in any principle of economic rationality. Malinowski's student and successor, Raymond Firth, had more knowledge of economics and offered a more careful analysis of the property system of the Tikopia (1965 [1939]). He showed the co-existence of principles of individual ownership (and as a corollary the social recognition of theft) with principles of joint ownership by a kin group, or by a chief as its head. Land and important items such as sacred canoes fell into the latter category.

Max Gluckman (whose extra-anthropological training was in law and who made important contributions to legal anthropology) developed another influential property metaphor with his concept of 'estates of administration' (1965), which grew out of his fieldwork in southern Africa in the late colonial period. While the notion of 'bundle of rights' was inherently static and conveyed nothing of how the various rights were connected, Gluckman's contribution emphasised the delegation of rights in a political hierarchy. Thus, land might be 'ultimately' owned by a king (as it is in Great Britain), but the typical African king delegated rights to regional chiefs, who in turn delegated to village headmen. The headman allocated plots to the households of the settlement; each wife might receive her own plot to cultivate, which Gluckman referred to as an 'estate of production'. It is futile to seek in the 'hierarchy of

estates of administration' for an equivalent to a European private owner. Land tenure was neither perfectly collective nor individual, but mirrored the social structure of the group. In the case of an acephalous group, rights over any land that fell out of use reverted upwards to the group as a whole. The most basic principle in sub-Saharan Africa, where land was not generally very scarce, was that the political authorities were obliged to provide citizens with as much land as they needed for their subsistence.

Gluckman's analysis was designed in part to correct the errors and abuses of colonial administrators, who had sometimes treated chiefs or kings as owners in a European sense, and neglected to take into account their obligations towards their subjects. In other cases, colonial officials classified apparently-unused land as 'wasteland' in order to transfer it into the ownership of the colonial power, ignoring the customary rights of indigenous groups. Such cases have continued to generate controversy in post-colonial decades, when those groups have protested against the colonial decrees and treaties and sought to regain their property rights. It is seldom possible to restore those rights in anything like their original form, but many anthropologists have worked to support native title claims to remedy historic wrongs and to secure economic benefits for indigenous groups in the present and future.

Much of the recent anthropological work in this field has also stemmed from legal specialists. The most convincing attempt to devise a general analytic framework for understanding property regimes has come from Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann (1999). They apply the notion of layer not to the social structure of particular societies in the manner of Gluckman, but to social organisation abstractly. The most general layer is given by the norms of a cultural tradition (they also use the term 'ideology'). Let us term this first layer, 'cultural–ideological'. Layer two consists of political and legal regulations, which may come in a plurality of registers, and that specify, for example, the form in which objects are to be held and whether or not they can be alienated. Let us call this the 'legal–institutional' layer. Layer three consists of the 'social relations' of property, for example the particular land use or inheritance patterns and the way that they may be tied to particular forms of kinship, or the ways that those uses and patterns may be more or less egalitarian. Finally, at the layer of 'practices' the actors may reinforce the patterns of the other layers or they may initiate changes. It is an open question whether change at layer two (legal–institutional) can cause changes elsewhere, or whether exogenous variables, such as technological innovation or external military or political interventions, are the usual prime factors in bringing about a change in the property regime. The framework does not single out the economic dimension as such. It emphasises the complexity and systemic embeddedness of property (compare Hann 1998), which must be analysed at all four of these layers and not merely in terms of the jural form in which

goods are held. Change may proceed at differential rates at the different layers, so it might be hard or even impossible to reach agreement on when precisely a global 'transformation of the property regime' has taken place.

In any case, the ethnographers of the twentieth century largely abandoned the nineteenth-century concern with explaining evolutionary changes, whether in relation to economic rationality or in the context of political and jural institutions. There were, of course, notable exceptions. Goody (1976) analysed the 'women's property complex' in Eurasian societies, and showed how this type of 'diverging devolution' differed from the dominant mode of property transfer in sub-Saharan Africa where, in the absence of plough agriculture, land was generally abundant and rights in persons were much more important than rights in things. But very few twentieth-century anthropologists drew comparisons on this scale; the majority abandoned historical and evolutionary questions to a small minority of their colleagues and to archaeologists (see Hunt and Gilman 1998).

Property is everywhere: communisms, primitive and modern

The broad anthropological approach to property presupposes that its various layers can be explored in all human societies. This can be conveniently demonstrated by taking two extreme cases in which the applicability of the concept of property has been questioned. First, let us look at 'immediate return' hunter-gatherers, food collectors with simple technologies and little or no storage capacity, whom Woodburn (1982) has famously characterised as 'disengaged from property'. By this he means that there is little or no individual possession of production or consumption goods and a very strong emphasis upon sharing. Informal sanctions such as ridicule and practices such as gambling help to ensure that no individual can accumulate property objects. These highly egalitarian societies approximate the ideal type of primitive communism, as developed in Marxist anthropology (Engels 1972 [1884]). Recent ethnographers have, however, modified nineteenth-century speculations in numerous ways. Few would maintain that this degree of egalitarianism was necessarily the baseline of all human societies at some point in the distant past. Rather, people such as the Bushmen of Southern Africa may have developed their distinctive property relationships as a consequence of the particular arid environments they inhabit and particular patterns of interaction with pastoral and agricultural neighbours, including in recent centuries the impact of European colonists.

It has also been shown that even these societies of immediate return leave some space for the actors to assert exclusive links to specific property objects. Woodburn himself has described how a successful hunter typically does not assert rights of ownership, but is likely to play down his skill. The meat of large animals is taken back to camp and shared among all those present; or,

rather, among all able to assert a claim. This 'demand sharing' poses a puzzle to economists and to neo-Darwinian theorists, who have struggled to explain hunter–gatherer property practices in terms of some underlying rationality. On the other hand, small game may be consumed immediately by the hunter himself. In many societies, such as the Hadza of Tanzania, studied by Woodburn himself, the meat of a large animal must be divided up in ways formally prescribed by ritual. Women are excluded from this knowledge and from shares in the prestigious meat: this distribution pattern can be interpreted as evidence that, even in the most egalitarian of human societies, there are property rules that express social cleavage based on gender.

In the absence of any formal or even informal jural institutions, it is hard to disentangle cultural–ideological from legal–institutional layers. Concrete social relationships, layer three in the framework of the von Benda-Beckmanns, may be fundamentally egalitarian, though it may still be interesting to examine how persons use property objects to maintain links of kinship and friendship. Meanwhile, at layer four (practices) there are likely to be some 'deviant' property practices which go against the grain of sharing and equality.

For another case in which the relevance of the property concept has been questioned we can take later communisms as they 'actually existed' in Eurasia under Marxist–Leninist regimes in the twentieth century. Western anthropological studies of socialist societies were few in number compared to field studies carried out in the colonies, but none the less offer instructive insights. Although it is sometimes claimed that socialist societies were characterised by a 'property vacuum', this is at best a half-truth (see Verdery 2003). The absence of private ownership of the means of production in most sectors of the economy did not mean the complete absence of property norms. Indeed, property figured prominently in socialist ideology, which proclaimed a hierarchy of virtue. Cooperative ownership was superior to private, individual ownership, but ownership by the state, by all citizens collectively, was viewed as the highest form of property, towards which all socialist states were supposed to be moving. In some sectors there was indeed a tendency to move to this higher form, such as in the shift from collective farms (*kolkhozy*) to state farms (*sovkhozy*) in the Russian North. However, many socialist states responded to economic difficulties in their later decades by expanding the possibilities for private property in the context of 'market socialism'.

Humphrey (1983), in the only comprehensive anthropological study of a Soviet *kolkhoz*, made innovative use of Gluckman's notion of a hierarchy of estates in probing how farm officials created 'manipulable resources' in the course of implementing central planning targets. My own field studies in Hungary and Poland in the 1970s (Hann 1985) also revealed disparities between ideology and practice. Hungarian villagers were collectivised in that

they were obliged to join 'cooperatives' and to make their fields and equipment available for joint use. Many continued to hold title to their land: they were no longer free to sell it, but this ownership could still have a bearing on the dividends they received from the socialist institution. Despite the coercive violation of their property rights, under market socialism they enjoyed considerable freedom to pursue profits through household farming. Their living standards rose appreciably in this period, and social inequalities increased. In Poland, on the other hand, the failure to pursue collectivisation led to a political stalemate. Peasants retained both title and use rights to their land, but here too the land market was suppressed and, compared to Hungary, farm investment and modernisation proceeded only very slowly. In terms of a broad assessment of their property rights, including not only their consumption possibilities but also their integration into a state welfare and pension system, the private farmers of Poland lagged behind their collectivised neighbours. Applying the framework of the von Benda-Beckmanns, we might say that there was a sharp conflict within layer one between socialist ideology and evolved cultural norms legitimating private ownership. Socialist intervention at layer two (the legal–institutional) led in the Hungarian case to new social relationships, as industrial-style farms replaced peasant households. For example, the position of rural women was transformed. At the same time, there were powerful counter-currents at layer four (practices), such as in the way in which private plots were used to generate supplementary income, both maintaining continuities with earlier familial divisions of labour and giving rise to new social hierarchies – based now on the ownership of consumer goods rather than land. The patterns of the rural sector in Hungary under market socialism anticipate those later documented for China in the reform period which began at the end of the 1970s. One clear lesson is that it is *not* necessary to have a rigorous legal specification of private property rights in the means of production in order to achieve high rates of economic growth. Economists may, however, continue to doubt whether ambiguities and restrictions on ownership and alienability are conducive to efficiency in the longer term. In any case, it seems clear that one important motivation behind improved economic output in these cases was the prospect of acquiring consumer goods with clearly defined and respected rights of private ownership.

The political transformations which began in 1989 gave property issues a new salience throughout the ex-socialist world. These are discussed in the chapter on postsocialist societies (see Hann chap. 35 infra).

Contemporary issues: commons, cultures and continuous technological change

Whereas anthropologists such as the von Benda-Beckmanns emphasise the multiple social functions of property, economists generally proceed from the

narrower assumptions of rational choice theory. A great deal of property theorising in all academic disciplines has focused on land, where the usual assumption of the economist is that rational agents will develop concepts of territoriality and construct boundaries around parcels of private property once the benefits from being able to exclude others exceed the costs of doing so, including not just the costs of the fences, but also long-term policing costs and the like. The same logic used to account for the origins of property is also deployed to prove that private ownership will lead to better husbandry, the conservation and improvement of natural resources. Many anthropologists have questioned these assumptions in their contributions to what is now a large interdisciplinary literature showing that alternative models based on common ownership may, even with regard to narrowly economic objectives, actually yield better solutions (McCay and Acheson 1987).

Economists have often equated communal ownership with open access (*res nullius*), and then predicted that the individual pursuit of immediate economic interest was bound to lead to the decline and possibly even to the elimination of the resource. Anthropologists, however, have shown that access and use can be controlled by local communities according to norms and the selective dissemination of knowledge of the key resources that are conducive to long-term sustainability. Attempts to intervene in such customary systems, whether by a central state of socialist type or via the imposition of a private property regime and a market system, may lead to greater environmental damage, for example if privatisation leads to increased concentration of capital, size of farm and application of deleterious chemicals. Experience has shown that neither nationalisation nor privatisation offers easy solutions. It is equally mistaken, however, to exaggerate the potential of communal ownership, particularly in circumstances of demographic pressure when different groups compete for resources or for control of the state. Many studies suggest that it then becomes hard or impossible to maintain earlier controls preventing resource depletion. The system of land tenure is likely to become more individualised and there is likely to be greater social inequality and even impoverishment, as some persons fail to lay effective claim to the resources they need to reproduce themselves (Ostrom 2002).

Most environmental anthropologists hold that the criterion of formal ownership in itself tells us little or nothing about the implications for sustainability. Much depends upon how the resource is managed, which depends in turn on power relationships and the entire context of embeddedness noted above. Similar conclusions emerge from maritime anthropology, though certain economic aspects are entirely different in this context. Since it is impossible to erect fences and to control the movement of fish, economic actors who depend on fishing for their livelihood are typically exposed to uncertainties greater than those faced by agriculturalists or pastoralists. Their

property arrangements reflect their efforts to reduce uncertainty, for example through the widespread practice of owning boats not individually but through shares. Rapid changes in technology have led to overfishing in many parts of the world and to novel attempts to avert a tragedy of the maritime commons. Canada, for example, has introduced a new form of property object, the 'individual transferable quota' (ITQ; similar principles have been implemented over a longer period in the European Union's 'common agricultural policy', notably with respect to milk quotas). Studies of this institution in the Maritime Provinces have revealed numerous problems, including the concentration of the industry into highly capitalised boats, which squeeze out the smaller fishermen (Wiber 2000). More effort to maintain decentralised schemes of community management of fishing stocks might have produced better results, since there is plenty of evidence that fishing communities have proved capable in the past of devising alternative arrangements to safeguard their key resources.

However, there are also well-documented cases of an abuse of the commons, for instance in the shellfish fishery which, given the less mobile nature of the prime property object, in some ways resembles agriculture more than it does fishing. Although the disaster which struck the oyster fishers of the Dutch island of Texel in the mid-nineteenth century has to be placed in a wider context, including ecological changes that had nothing to do with human interference, it seems clear that overexploitation of a commons resource was a major contributory factor (van Ginkel 1999). In the same article, however, the author shows that later state intervention and the effective privatisation of oyster grounds in Zeeland led to capitalisation of the industry and the proletarianisation of many formerly-independent producers. After a short-lived boom the market was saturated and oyster quality declined. In the twentieth century, policies of intervention and protection of fisheries by the Dutch state through the use of quotas and licences have functioned more successfully. In the mussel fishery, which is still largely based on family firms, a successful system of co-management has evolved. In the case of oysters, however, capitalist concentration and the entrepreneurial pursuit of short-term profits led to a collapse of the entire fishery through the spread of a parasitic disease. Van Ginkel (1999: 54) concludes that, while human interventions to 'cultivate' these maritime resources have brought some successes, 'privatisation does not necessarily provide shellfish farmers with incentives to maintain their harvests at an ecologically sustainable level'. The fisherman who owns or leases an oyster bed, or who has acquired an entitlement to a quota of a specific fish, lacks the flexibility to diversify his activities if problems arise in that sector. The conclusion is that the imposition of a model of 'farming the seas' leads not only to a loss of social cohesion but also to a loss of ecological diversity.

Melanie Wiber's Canadian study has also highlighted new problems arising out of the claims of indigenous groups. Similar issues have arisen elsewhere, such as in New Zealand, where the authorities have recognised Maori claims but still face formidable problems in implementing the logic of their property rights decision, given that most contemporary Maori live in the major cities and have little or no connection to their traditional territory and 'culture' (Van Meijl 2003). Anthropologists often face theoretical and practical dilemmas in such cases. On the one hand, indigenous understandings of the relationship between persons and the things in their environment are likely to differ from the forms of exclusive link presupposed by the standard liberal model. On the other hand, anthropologists may argue that, if other groups need to ask for some form of permission in order to gain access, then the land in question cannot be classified as 'open access' and deserves to be seen as 'owned'. In this way it may be possible pragmatically to make the liberal model work *for* the interests of indigenous people.

Recent studies have suggested that such possibilities may exist in other, sometimes unlikely fields (Verdery and Humphrey 2004). When the natural resources of indigenous people and their knowledge of their environment have turned out to have commercial value for transnational corporations, above all in the pharmaceuticals industries, it was logical to extend the Western model of property. Earlier practices of 'bio-piracy' are therefore giving way to more responsible 'bio-prospecting', based on a recognition that the people who have preserved this form of intellectual property should be recompensed accordingly. Similar issues have arisen in the field of 'ethnic music', where economic logic would seem to dictate that the originators of music that generates commercial profits should share in those profits. Of course, in practice it may be as difficult to identify an original composer as it is to prevent the illegal copying and sharing of music by new communities of listeners, who creatively adapt technology to subvert the implementation of any form of copyright protection.

In cases such as these the attribution of specialist knowledge or artistic rights to specific individuals or sub-groups is likely to lead to resentment and dispute. To propose that an entire cultural collectivity be recognised as owner is hardly a solution, because it is often impossible to secure agreement on the boundaries of such units. Many anthropologists have documented the ways in which activists have created new boundaries in modern conditions by establishing certain artefacts or symbols as their unique 'cultural property'. The standardisation and dissemination of these products both internally and externally, for instance as commodities sold to tourists, is also promoted by the 'cultural heritage' programmes of UNESCO. In this way the dissemination of a standard liberal model of exclusive ownership has implications for the structuring of collective identities far beyond the field of economic relations.

Perhaps the most exciting field in which to examine property relationships today is the biomedical one. New reproductive technologies have shattered previous assumptions of fatherhood and motherhood, forcing courts and ultimately governments to formulate new definitions of what can and cannot be brought to the market as an alienable commodity. The simple liberal model does not help in balancing the claims of a surrogate against a social mother. Nor does it provide answers to the dilemmas arising in the latest phase of human genome research: should the medical databank which exists already for Iceland be replicated in other parts of the world, and should the commercial rights be transferred to private corporations (Pálsson and Harðardóttir 2002)? Are individuals the sovereign owners of their bodies, who should be left free to alienate such parts as they wish? If the construction of a sharp distinction between property in persons and things in Roman Law was a key moment in the emergence of the standard liberal model, in Western societies this distinction appears increasingly threatened by new technologies. Marilyn Strathern has long argued that the basic subject–object distinctions which frame not only the economist's model of property but also the broader anthropological tradition, with its apparently unproblematic dichotomy between persons and property objects, are not made by Melanesian peoples. In recent work (1999) she suggests ingeniously that Melanesian notions of a 'dividual' person harmonise better with the property relationships emerging from biomedical technologies than do the Western individualist assumptions which underpin the liberal model.

Conclusions

For some purposes it makes sense to stick closely to the dominant liberal sense of property in terms of objects held in exclusive ownership, usually alienable. Our terms lose analytic power if we speak in one and the same idiom of 'owning' one's DNA and struggles for the 'ownership' of a post-colonial state. Contested claims to the 'ownership' of Transylvania or of powerful cultural symbols should perhaps be excluded from the purview of the economic anthropologist. Yet it is important to recognise the commonalities that have led to this slippage: these draw attention to the social complexity of property and the necessity of moving beyond narrow economic or legal definitions.

In practice, anthropologists adapt the precise operational scope of concepts of property and ownership to the nature of the problem at hand. For example, the privatisation campaigns of postsocialist governments can be assessed in multiple frameworks. In the rural sphere, a broader framework might lead us to conclude that the former members of the collective farms may have gained land as individual owners, but lost the social security entitlements and employment security they enjoyed under socialism, arguably also a form of

property. But it is also legitimate in cases such as this to follow through the implications of decollectivisation in a narrower framework. Tatjana Thelen (2003) has argued that the return to private ownership in the Hungarian countryside led to a return to patriarchal authority. It is true that women were able to claim back land owned by their families prior to collectivisation. However, even when they were formally registered as legal owners, effective management of the new private farm lay with the male household head. In this way, Thelen's account goes beyond a merely legalistic documentation of changing ownership to explore the power dynamics within the household that give postsocialist property reforms their tremendous social significance; but she does not find it helpful to expand the concept of property to include other forms of social entitlement affecting the life-world.

The main property object in Thelen's analysis is once again land. Ecological and demographic concerns are continuing to place this resource at the centre of anthropological work. Whereas Gluckman, writing in the late colonial period, could identify the obligation of the chief to provide as much land as his subjects needed as a basic principle of African land tenure, in recent decades population pressure in many regions has led to land scarcity. Where the neoliberal response is to prescribe radical privatisation and marketisation, anthropologists have tended to highlight the shortcomings of such strategies. The economists' policy prescriptions often neglect technical preconditions for implementing a new titling system, including creation of effective legal machinery to recognise inheritance and sale. In many parts of the world the state is simply unable to satisfy these preconditions. It is similarly incapable of alleviating the consequences of unprecedented social polarisation. As a result, even the World Bank and other agencies involved in development schemes have backed away from liberal fundamentalism in recent years. As alternative paths, we have noted that models based on a commons can be devised and practised by local communities. There is, however, increasing recognition that decentralisation of decision taking does not always bring optimal outcomes. Ownership *per se* seems to become less important than the political negotiation of complex forms of co-management between and among local and state actors.

Anthropologists have shown that the effects of property must be explored at all the layers of social organisation and practice. Recognition of complexity need not prevent the economic anthropologist from attempting precise causal analyses and even cross-cultural generalisations. The framework put forward by the von Benda-Beckmanns (1999) must be supplemented to allow the more rigorous pursuit of economic links, for example in specifying the conditions that must be met if a general shift in the form of landholding is indeed to lead to the desired goals of securing both farmers' income and resource sustainability. Again, the point can be illustrated from the postsocialist

societies, where the diagnosis of 'fuzzy' property (Verdery 1999) is a particular unstable variant of the more general embeddedness of property in social relationships. There is good evidence from these societies that attempts to implement privatisation policies in unfavourable institutional environments lead to many undesired consequences (Hann and the Property Relations Group 2003). Similar lessons have been learned from countless development interventions in the 'Third World'. To this extent the contribution of the anthropologist is not to rail against the models of the economist, but rather to draw attention to some of the 'externalities' they conveniently overlook and thereby bring the analysis closer to the realities that will determine the success or failure of policies on the ground. There is evidence in all societies of a human desire to assert rights of ownership, and it is hard to refute the basic assumption of a link via incentives between exclusive ownership of productive resources and economic performance. Rather than contest the circularities of neoclassical economic theory, the anthropologist can play a critical role in staking out the necessary preconditions and contexts within which property rights theories and incentives might be operationalised in order to work in the interests of the whole society. For this it will always be important to begin with the first, cultural–ideological layer of the model of the von Benda-Beckmanns, social norms and values, those ideals of the person and the collectivity which in all known human societies impose a reality check on models of hyper-commodification.

Meanwhile, new technologies are continuously creating new forms of property object and straining the capacity of the standard liberal model. The most acute dilemmas have arisen in the biomedical field, where questions of ownership cannot be divorced from people's deeply held views about ethics and the nature of the person. Radical economists in the neoclassical tradition, such as the Nobel laureate Gary Becker, have no compunction in advocating free markets and maximum alienability of body parts. But their unassailable logic conflicts with most people's views that one's kidney simply cannot be treated as an item of alienable personal property, analogous to a piece of furniture or a car. Examples such as this suggest that technological change and normative concerns may be undermining the standard liberal model of property. The vision of a world of alienable commodities, in which every item can be attributed to one exclusive owner, has always been an over-simplification.

In eras of technological change, the meanings and social significance of property are bound to remain dynamic. The economic anthropologist approaches this topic by combining explorations of political economy with sensitive accounts of the variation to be found in the ways different communities perceive and manipulate different types of thing. The key to this sort of understanding remains ethnographic fieldwork. In recent years

anthropologists have revelled in pointing to cultural incongruities, such as the way that the standard liberal model of ownership is extended to ever-more forms of 'incorporeal' goods as these acquire value on increasingly globalised marketplaces. There is no end in sight to this process. These extensions are shaped by political and economic factors, and the new forms of property in turn have consequences for political economy, for example in the support they provide for a world of reified 'cultures', and for further transformations of biotechnologies, with all that this implies.

It might, finally, be worthwhile to approach some of these exciting contemporary developments from the evolutionary perspective that characterised anthropological theorising about property in its early phases in the nineteenth century. For example, anthropologists have tended to be highly critical of the short-sighted privatisation programmes advocated by economists, and rightly so. But if carefully implemented, the strengthening of private property may have a positive feedback in other domains, including both production and reproduction rates. Thus Goody (2003) has linked Africa's recent rapid demographic transition to the emergence of a property system that is now biased towards rights in things rather than persons, where land is no longer the 'free good' that it effectively was in the late colonial period. The revival of an evolutionist agenda cannot be restricted to a narrow focus on the economic rationality that allegedly lies behind the rise of private property, but must open up to a broad consideration of property at all four of the layers identified by Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Franz von Benda-Beckmann, Tatjana Thelen, Katherine Verdery and Melanie Wiber for helpful comments on an earlier draft.

References

Engels, F. 1972 (1884). *The origin of the family, private property and the state*. New York: Pathfinder Press.

Firth, R. 1965 (1939). *Primitive Polynesian economy*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Gluckman, M. 1965. *The ideas in Barotse jurisprudence*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.

Goody, J. 1976. *Production and reproduction: a comparative study of the domestic domain.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Goody, J. 2003. Globalization and the domestic group. *Urban Anthropology* 32: 41–55.

Hann, C.M. 1985. *A village without solidarity: Polish peasants in years of crisis.* New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.

Hann, C.M. (ed.) 1998. *Property relations: renewing the anthropological tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hann, C.M. and the Property Relations Group 2003. *The postsocialist agrarian question: property relations and the rural condition*. Münster: LIT Verlag.

Humphrey, C. 1983. *Karl Marx collective: politics, society and religion on a Siberian collective farm*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hunt, R.C. 1998. Properties of property: conceptual issues. In *Property in economic context* (eds) R.C. Hunt and A. Gilman. Lanham, Md.: University Press of America.

Hunt, R.C. and A. Gilman (eds) 1998. *Property in economic context*. Lanham, Md.: University Press of America.
MacPherson C.B. 1962. *The political theory of possessive individualism: Hobbes to Locke*. Oxford: Clarendon.
Maine, H. 1861. *Ancient law*. London: John Murray.
Malinowski, B. 1935. *Coral gardens and their magic*. London: Allen & Unwin.
Mauss, M. 1990 (1925). *The gift: the form and reason for exchange in archaic societies*. London: Routledge.
McCay, B. and J. Acheson (eds) 1987. *The question of the commons*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.
Ostrom, E. (ed.) 2002. *The drama of the commons*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
Pálsson, G. and K.E. Harðardóttir 2002. For whom the cell tolls: debates about biomedicine. *Current Anthropology* 43: 271–301.
Peters, P.E. 1998. The erosion of commons and the emergence of property: problems for social analysis. In *Property in economic context* (eds) R.C. Hunt and A. Gilman. Lanham, Md.: University Press of America.
Strathern, M. 1999. *Property, substance and effect*. London: Athlone.
Thelen, T. 2003. *Privatisierung und soziale Ungleichheit in der osteuropäischen Landwirtschaft: Zwei Fallstudien aus Ungarn und Rumänien*. Frankfurt a.M.: Campus.
van Ginkel, R. 1999. Capturing and culturing the commons: public–private dynamics in the Dutch oyster and mussel industry. In *Creative governance; opportunities for fisheries in Europe* (eds) J. Kooiman, M. van Vliet and S. Jentoft. Aldershot: Ashgate.
Van Meijl, T. 2003. Who owns the fisheries? Changing views of property and its redistribution in postcolonial Maori society. Presented at the conference 'Changing properties of property', Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle, 2–4 July.
Verdery, K. 1999. Fuzzy property: rights, power and identity in Transylvania's decollectivization. In *Uncertain transition: ethnographies of change in the postsocialist world* (eds) M. Burawoy and K. Verdery. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield.
Verdery, K. 2003. *The vanishing hectare: property and value in postsocialist Transylvania*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
Verdery, K. and C. Humphrey (eds) 2004. *Property in question: value transformation in the global economy*. Oxford: Berg.
von Benda-Beckmann, F. and K. von Benda-Beckmann 1999. A functional analysis of property rights, with special reference to Indonesia. In *Property rights and economic development: land and natural resources in southeast Asia and Oceania* (eds) T. van Meijl and F. von Benda-Beckmann. London: Kegan Paul International.
Wiber, M. 2000. Fishing rights as an example of the economic rhetoric of privatization. *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 37: 267–88.
Woodburn, J. 1982. Egalitarian societies. *Man* (n.s.) 17: 431–51.

8 Labour

E. Paul Durrenberger

Economists are known for their qualification ‘all other things being equal’, while anthropologists have made a discipline of the fact that things are never equal. Economic anthropology today is not best thought of as the study of economy in non-Western settings, but rather as anthropological approaches to economy in any setting. To meet their material needs, people produce, distribute and consume goods. Economic anthropology describes the systems in which people do these things, how these systems are organised, how they operate, how they got that way, how they relate to other systems, how people behave and make decisions in terms of such systems, and the consequences of people’s actions for the systems. To understand how various economic systems organise production, distribution and consumption, we have to understand what the system is, what its parts are and how the parts relate to one another. Another goal of economic anthropology is to describe these systems in locally meaningful terms that are universally relevant and useful for understanding any economic system at any time and any place (Durrenberger 1996).

Here I shall discuss how anthropologists have classified economic systems in terms of the means they use to organise labour for production, the classification of production units according to different roles of labour in them, the role of labour in modern complex societies, how globalisation affects the organisation of labour, and the relationships between people’s involvement with labour and the forms of their consciousness, their cultures.

Labour and the classification of economic systems

To understand capitalism, Karl Marx analysed the role of labour in the process of production. He observed that all useful objects are products of some amount of human labour. The amount of labour an object contains determines the value of the object in exchange for other objects. The amount of labour an object contains depends on the technology of the place and time and the organisation of the process of production. While this approach provides a means for understanding the role of labour in any system, Marx argued that the key to capitalism is the understanding and treating of labour as a thing that people can buy and sell, a commodity like any other.

Like any commodity, the value of labour is determined by the amount of labour necessary to produce it. Thus the value of labour is the amount of

labour necessary to produce the things a worker needs for subsistence and to keep working. Capitalism can produce profits when people can organise production in such a way as to pay a worker the value of the worker's labour as wages and then use the worker's labour to produce the value of the wages and more. The difference between the value a worker produces and the worker's wages is profit. Capitalism, thus, depends on organising labour in such a way that it is possible for the buyers of labour to gain profits by their use of the wage relationship, a social relationship that organises production in capitalist societies.[1]

The wage relationship is only one of the ways that labour, produtive effort, can be organised. Eric Wolf (1999) argued that there are three main means of organising labour to extract value from those who produce it by their work: kinship, tribute and capitalism. Each defines a characteristic mode of production with its own forms of distribution and social relations, and its own beliefs, values and practices that make it seem inevitable and self-perpetuating. For capitalism, as long as capitalists own the means of production and workers do not, the capitalist mode appears to be self-perpetuating because workers are continuously forced back into working for capitalists after each cycle of production is complete. Because they have no access to the means of production, they can never break free of the cycle. He points out the critical role of the state in starting and maintaining this mode of production.[2]

These reflections give us a means of developing a comparative study of economic systems. We can arrange any political economy, any social order, in a grid with all others according to how it mobilises labour. Wolf and others seem largely agreed on a threefold classification of kinship, tributary and capitalist ways of organising labour. In kinship-dominated systems relationships of kinship order relations of production. In tributary systems, force organises the uses of labour. Capitalist systems mobilise labour by conjoining the apparatus of states with property and wage systems. Put bluntly, when it turns productive resources such as common land into private property, the state deprives people of any practical alternative but to sell their labour as a commodity, which makes it available for capitalist production and the creation of profits.

If profit is generated by the difference between the value of labour and the value of its product, it is also generated by the difference between the cost and the product of machines. Marx measured the difference in terms of labour time; Alf Hornberg (2001: 148) argues for measuring something different, energy flows. He classifies possible modes of profit accumulation as (1) plunder, (2) merchant capitalism, (3) financial capitalism, (4) under-compensation of labour for its product by slavery, by barter through exchange of unequal amounts of labour time, by redistribution or wages and

(5) underpayment for energy and raw materials for food in relation to labour, for fodder in relation to draft animals or for fuels in relation to industrial manufacture. He suggests that while some of these modes may be empirically observable in relatively pure form, most are inextricably mixed (2001: 69–70). Thus, several forms of production may operate in the same economic system at the same time. This raises the question of different kinds of units of production, for it is these that can exhibit different modes of accumulation.

Labour and classifying production units

The means of recruiting labour has been central for classifying not only political–economic systems, but also their component units of production. In capitalist societies in which firms recruit labour via the market, unwaged labour may continue to play an important role in other forms of production such as households, whose members provide most if not all of the labour requirements for production.

A Russian agricultural economist, A.V. Chayanov, argued that assessments of labour were central to the logic of peasant households. People produce according to the logic of the balance of the exponentially increasing drudgery of labour and the exponentially decreasing marginal utility of the goods their labour produces. To paraphrase Chayanov, the more people work the less they want to work more, the more their needs are satisfied by the goods they produce, the less satisfaction any additional ones add. When the drudgery of the next unit of labour exceeds the utility of the goods it produces, people stop working. At that point, it is not worth their effort to continue production (Durrenberger and Tannenbaum 2002).

Thus, households answer to a different calculus of advantage than do firms. While firms must always compute profits, households have no means of doing so because they pay no wages. So, unlike firms, for households the factors that influence the volume of production are the direness of need and the drudgery of labour. Chayanov conceived of the drudgery of labour as the inverse of productivity: the greater the productivity of labour, the less the drudgery. Thus, in the ascending curve of drudgery of labour, if a new process or technology doubles the amount that each hour of work produces, the assessment of drudgery for each additional unit of labour is only half as much. The curve of marginal utility of goods reflects the costs of the new process or technology because it includes the increased demand on the goods produced to compensate for it, for instance by purchasing productive equipment or paying interest on a loan. As this suggests, anything that affects the productivity of labour affects the balance of production for households. If the fertility of land decreases, productivity decreases and drudgery of labour increases proportionally.

In making these points, Chayanov drew no distinction between producing

goods for immediate use and for sale. However, if people produce goods for sale, anything that affects the price of their goods also affects their productivity, because their objective is the money from the sale. Thus, if the costs of transportation to markets are high, productivity declines because people receive less for their goods. In other words, Chayanov did not confine his understanding to agricultural households, but supposed that people would follow the same logic of advantage in households that produced crafts or other market wares. The value of Chayanov's analysis is that it is general, but all the factors that affect the utility and drudgery curves have to be locally defined in terms of the specifics of each example. This means that the analyses must incorporate the effects of the broader political and economic system on productivity and need.

This difference between the orientation of firms and of families can be illustrated with the North American fishing industry. Economists usually assume that fishermen operate according to the logic of profitability the way firms do. In New England, the southern United States, and the east and west coasts of Canada, the fishing industry is diverse (Apostle and Barrett 1992; Griffith 1993; Marchak, Guppy and McMullan 1987). Doeringer, Moss and Terkla (1986) found in New England that many fishermen did not leave the fishery when their economic model predicted they would. To account for this, they distinguished a capitalist sector from a kinship sector in the fishery, which is parallel to the distinction between firms and households. Because boats in the kinship sector are owned and operated by families and work is shared, people continue to fish as long as they can cover their costs. Consequently, the capitalist sector changes with market conditions, while the kinship sector remains more constant because it can survive conditions that are lethal to capitalists. In some New England fisheries the flexibility of the kinship sector to expand in good times and underemploy people to maintain itself during bad times gives it a competitive edge over the capitalist sector (Doeringer, Moss and Terkla 1986: 119). This is one of the ways that, even in advanced capitalist systems, production organised in terms of the household plays an important role (Durrenberger 1996).

If people produce for their needs, then the more consumers each worker has to support, the more income each worker should produce; the fewer consumers each worker has to support, the less income each worker should produce. The number of consumers each worker has to support is, then, one determinant of the level of marginal utility of the things (including wages) that workers produce. To assess this, though, we also need to assess 'need', which is not an absolute but a function of the socially-defined relevant standard of living. We also have to know all of the sources of demand besides supplying the needs of the people in the household: it makes a big difference whether one is in debt or already owns a farm or boat debt-free. For households that are economic

units, all sources of demand on income are equivalent, on a par with the consumption needs of household members. These are not treated as separate costs of the household's 'business'. On the other hand, firms operate in terms of the logic of the amount of profit they can extract via the difference between the wages they pay and the value that this labour produces.

State and labour in firms and modern societies

To understand modern political–economic systems we must understand the politics of capital as well as the economics of politics. The comparative perspective of economic anthropology allows us to re-examine contemporary capitalist economic systems from a viewpoint different from what Stiglitz (2002) called the religion of 'market fundamentalism'. He calls this a religion because it seems to be impervious to any counter-statements based on experience or reality. Its premises and conclusions, he suggests, are counter-factual and immune to the self-corrective feedback between hypothesis and observation that characterises science. In *Globalization and its discontents* (2002) he is intent on showing that markets do not just exist as forces of nature: they are institutional structures with histories and costs. Markets do not occur naturally: the apparatus of states creates them and must maintain them. Historical works show just how intense the involvement of states is in creating and maintaining various kinds of markets, as well as the role of wages, profits and capital in the process of development.

One view of development envisages an upward spiral of capitalist production that Wolf discusses (1997). People invest capital in technology that increases productivity and thus creates profits that can be put back into the production process as capital. As productive technology develops, it increases productive capacity and so reduces the amount of labour it takes to produce a given commodity, which reduces the commodity's cost and so protects the firm's share of the market. After all, those who control capital strive to produce as cheaply as possible so that they can sell their product for a smaller price and control a larger share of the market. As their market share increases, producers increase their productive capacity even more to further enhance profits, which can re-enter the production cycle to develop new technology, reduce labour costs and expand their sales even more. As this process continues, bigger producers use profits to lower prices and so increase demand. Thus, there are more profits, more capital, more efficient technology and higher productivity, more production, lower prices and increased demand. The system spirals upward much in the way Marx envisaged in *Capital*.

Especially if labour is sufficiently organised to make collective claims, such economic benefits that the firm enjoys may be passed along as increased wages. However, it is in states in which the owners of capital hold relatively great influence that the anti-social dimensions of market fundamentalism

become apparent. For instance, Kate Bronfenbrenner and her co-authors (1998) show that the weakness of the labour movement in the United States is due to well-organised, massive and often violent opposition, rather than worker lack of interest, individualism, or some inscrutable difference between the US and European countries that makes it an exception (Vanneman and Weber 1987; Durrenberger 1992a, 1992b, 1994, 1995, 1996). A concerted anti-union offensive is a major cause. Cohen and Hurd (1998) outline a general pattern of worker intimidation that Fantasia (1988) shows ethnographically.

The division between those who own capital and those who sell their labour to them defines two classes (Durrenberger 2000). 'Classes', Zweig (2001: 11) explains, 'are groups of people connected to one another, and made different from one another, by the ways they interact when producing goods and services'. The differences between them, however, are not limited to the realm of production. Rather, they extend into political and sociocultural areas of life, where the rules and expectations that guide the economy are established in ways that suit the needs of the powerful. Different productive roles carry different incomes and prestige, but the most important feature is the different power they confer. Class is not a matter of lifestyle: 'It is about economics' (2001: 11). Zweig argues that a small capitalist class has the power to organise and direct production, while a vast majority of working-class people have virtually no authority. On the job, in the market, in politics, in culture, workers have little control.

Zweig shows that since 1972 the median individual income in the United States has fallen 20 per cent, though family incomes remained unchanged because more people from each household joined the workforce. As companies made record profits they laid off workers, which increased people's feelings of insecurity. To maintain levels of consumption, working people resorted to unprecedented levels of debt. These changes occurred in spite of dramatic increases in output and productivity per hour of work. As production increased 42 per cent, 60 per cent of the gains went to the richest 1 per cent of families, while the bottom 80 per cent got just 5 per cent of the increase. As top incomes increased 77 per cent, the bottom 20 per cent of the population experienced income declines of 9 per cent. The poorest fifth of the US population worked 4.6 per cent more and got 4.1 per cent less income. The means of this increased appropriation of wealth from those who produced it, Zweig argues, is successful class warfare of the capitalist class against the working class.

Global economics and politics

In his 1997 preface to *Europe and the people without history*, Wolf understood political economy as the study of ' societies, states, and markets as historically evolving phenomena' and questioned whether there is a universally valid

analysis of capitalism (1997: ix). He wanted to understand how unstable systems of power to control labour develop, change and expand their reach through time and space over the structures that determine and circumscribe people's lives.

Social configurations, Wolf argued, have always been parts of larger contradictory connections. Since the rise and expansion of capitalism to all parts of the planet, the connections and contradictions have intensified until the system is so complex that it is quasi-random. That does not mean we cannot understand it, but it does mean we cannot predict what will happen with any degree of accuracy. Wolf argued that the main causes of this expansion and its effects are the processes by which a social order mobilises labour. To understand that, he focused on the institutional structures that guide relations of people with one another and with natural environments (that is, resources). The combination of ownership and management of resources with the use of hired labour in factory production enabled capitalism to undo other arrangements. There have been changes in the distribution of factories, markets, the recruitment of workers, technology and organisation to produce differing mixes of products. In early times the capital of traders financed these arrangements. In recent times computer-based information and control technologies with new means of transportation are decentralising production, ultimately making it global, and increasing the amount of production in households and workshops, which are more flexible than factories.

Hornberg (2001: 63) argues that the rationale of globalisation and free trade is the asymmetric transfer of labour time that is obscured by accounts kept in dollars instead of hours of work. We know about the transformations of ecosystems, he argues, because we can observe them locally, but we know less about the workings of global systems. He points out that the infrastructure of industrialising Europe was supported not only by the labour of their working classes but also with the labour of slaves from Africa, the soils of America and Australia, the forests of Sweden.

Sidney Mintz (1985) analysed the relationships among slave labour in Caribbean plantations and the working classes in English factories and the political–economic nexus that connected them so that the sugar the slaves produced subsidised the value of labour in English factories while the cheapening factory labour subsidised the plantation economy. In fact, he argues that in the seventeenth century, Caribbean plantations, not English factories, were the cutting edge of industrial development. They were characterised by strict labour discipline to integrate mill work with field work using interchangeable units of labour in an extremely time-conscious process that integrated more- and less-skilled workers using tools and facilities that did not belong to them to produce a product that the producers did not consume (1985: 50–52).

The industrialisation of Caribbean sugar may appear to be an example of the upward spiral of development. That spiral, however, has important consequences. It results in enlarged productive capacity and in surpluses that the producers cannot sell. This initiates a downward spiral. Producers need to reduce costs, so they cut costs of labour by making greater investments in technology to increase productivity even more. They combine efforts with competitors for research and development. They begin to sell their plants, fire middle management, convert permanent jobs to temporary ones and contract out as many processes as they can. As well, producers look for new markets where demand is greater than supply and relocate production in places where they can gain political favours to control wages and taxes and to provide access to markets. Here, state policies may be more or less attractive to companies. Those states that practise Draconian control of labour and the middle classes are more attractive (Wilson 1992) as are those that offer concessions to firms (Bonanno and Constance 1996).

Since the Second World War, manufacturing has moved to those places that promise low taxes, cheap labour and little regulation. If one place enacts or enforces environmental laws, the facility moves to one without such burdens. Smithfield, an American meat-packing company, moved its production unit from Virginia, with strict environmental laws, to North Carolina, with more lax regulations (Barboza 2000; Durrenberger and Thu 1997a, 1997b); General Motors moved auto production from Michigan to Mexico.

There is yet more. As productivity increases there is less return per unit manufactured, and thus less profit. This sparks a search for sources of capital other than accumulated profits. One source is capital markets. Of course, those who gain capital in the global capital auctions must pay for it, and the money they pay for the use of capital reduces their profits. The reduction of profits leads to pressure to reduce wages, and to corporations borrowing more capital. So there is a self-intensifying process of less profit, more borrowing, more payment for the use of capital, less profits. At the same time, the need to borrow capital leads to a shift in power from corporate management to the financiers who control the flow of funds to corporations, and finance capital gains power over productive capital, over the machines and plants that produce things. So, when companies raise capital by selling stocks and shares, they shift from an emphasis on what Stiglitz (2002) calls the substantive economy, the production of things, to finance, and become liable to financial processes that have nothing to do with production. These can contribute to national crises and result in further quasi-random results that Stiglitz (2002) documents as international crises.

As the industrial sector has waned in the Northern Hemisphere, as firms seek locations with fewer restrictions on their activities, labour has become an international commodity. One result is that unions lose influence, for they

have been rooted in local conditions and processes (Durrenberger 1997; Durrenberger and Erem 1997a, 1997b, 1999a, 1999b, 2000). They may try to regain political and market influence by organising service employees, including public workers. However, when they organise public workers effectively, governments privatise the work; when they organise the private sector, corporations hire temporary workers or move the work to other locales.

The processes I have described indicate that unions operate in an environment that is shaped by states through their laws, policies and practices, and the political power they represent. If anthropologists have not developed theories of states, sociologists have them to spare. Bonanno and Constance (1996) classify these as theories that cast the state (1) as an instrument of the capitalist class, (2) as an institution with some autonomy from capitalist domination, (3) as an autonomous institution and (4) as an institution that is a mix of instrumentalist and autonomous roles.

The first sort of theory asserts that the state is an instrument of the capitalist class either because state bureaucrats are of the ruling class and they are bound to that class through socialisation, or because the capitalist class exercises control over the state by means of its control over the economy. The second, the relative autonomy view, holds that the state balances the interests of capitalists with the state's need to legitimate itself via ideology and the allocation of resources to other class interests, while maintaining relative autonomy from class interests. The third, the autonomy view, holds that the state maintains its own agenda and interests apart from the capitalist class or any other. Bonanno and Constance favour the fourth, the mixed approach. They say that capitalism is not possible without state participation because the state maintains the conditions for the reproduction of capital, but at the same time the state mediates other interests to legitimate itself. The state in this view is not autonomous because it is dependent for its resources on accumulation through economic growth.

Accustomed to thinking of non-state systems and different kinds of states and economies, anthropologists note the short-term nature of these sociological representations because they all centre on the role of states in capitalist systems. When we add a historic dynamic of globalisation that expands commodity relations around the planet (Wolf 1997), we see that the conditions of accumulation and the roles of states continuously change as different kinds of political and economic roles rise and fall at different times and in different places. With the globalisation of production, some owners of capital pressure those states that have maintained conditions favourable to capital to adopt protectionist measures, while others push in other directions. This is apparent if we consider the different ways that firms sought to protect their profit and improve their competitive position in the final third of the twentieth century.

In the United States, many firms focused on reducing the cost of labour by

a sustained attack on organised labour (Gottschalk 1998) or by exporting jobs to Third-World countries that offered plentiful, low-cost female labour for labour-intensive manufacturing processes in textiles, garments, shoes, toys and electronics. In Europe, on the other hand, countries were protected by tariff barriers and inexpensive regional and migrant labour. Japanese corporations increased productivity by revamping manufacturing methods and increasingly used low-cost labour in Taiwan, South Korea, Thailand and Malaysia (Wilson 1992). Low-cost labour, however, was not available everywhere. In Latin America, industrial workers joined with the growing urban middle classes and the influxes of rural migrants to produce populist movements that, among other things, demanded a share of the fruits of industrialisation. These countries were not attractive to corporations that wanted a labour force that could be denied an increasing share of the wealth they created. In other parts of the world, the situation was different: Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore and South Korea maintained authoritarian control over their middle classes and workers, often with direct military and police assistance from the United States (Wilson 1992).

Thus, the policies of different states created different environments, more or less attractive to multinational corporations. National trade policies exposed First-World corporations to competition or protected them from it. As the global system expanded the role of states changed, sometimes quickly. And of course when states had to approach the World Bank for loans, they lost control of their economic policies. These instances show why the global system is chaotic and not given to prediction: the forces at work are complex and contradictory. For instance, we cannot specify a single set of functions for all states: states gain influence; states lose influence; American foreign policy sets the stage for oppression of labour in Asian lands; Asian lands offer opportunities for corporations seeking cheap labour; and so on.

The kind of production complexity that is associated with this state of affairs is illustrated by the tuna industry (this discussion draws on Bonanno and Constance 1996). The tale begins with Thailand's Board of Trade, which favours export-oriented firms and makes the country a favourable locale for tuna canning. Safcol is a subsidiary of Southern Farmers Group, Australia's third-largest food processor (which in turn is part of Industry Equity, the fourth-largest company in Australia). It has seven tuna-processing plants in Thailand. A subsidiary of Safcol in San Diego purchases frozen tuna on the world market, which feeds the processing plants in Thailand, and it distributes the products in the United States. Why do things this way? Most of the labour cost of processing tuna is filleting them. Processors therefore ship the tuna to where labour is cheap, process them there, freeze them and then ship them to plants in US territory, such as American Samoa or Puerto Rico, where they can be canned and sold as a product of the United States. Of course, Safcol is not

the only global tuna firm. The world's largest exporter and canner of tuna is Unicord of Thailand, with nearly half of its sales in the United States, a third in Europe and 8 per cent in Japan. To counter US tariffs and quotas on imports of tuna, Unicord purchased a US tuna company, Bumble Bee. The base of this operation is Unicord's Thai factory, which employs 7000 workers.

By 1987, 35 per cent of American tuna was imported from Thailand, forcing US processors to move offshore and close their mainland canneries because of high operating costs. Unable to withstand the foreign competition as the amount of imported tuna tripled, US companies began to put their labels on imported canned products, or get out of tuna altogether. In 1988, the Ralston Purina company sold its tuna arm, 'Chicken of the Sea', to Mantrust, an Indonesian conglomerate with three tuna canneries in Indonesia and one in American Samoa. They closed the 'Chicken of the Sea' factory in Puerto Rico and opened one in Bali, where the wage for packing tuna is about US$1.45 per day.

This sort of complexity poses a problem for economic anthropologists, who have built their part of the discipline upon ethnographic fieldwork among people in specific places studying visible social relations and processes. The problem economic anthropologists face is this: the processes that I have described here are not visible in the ethnographic study of locales. If we follow the daily lives of Thai factory workers (as did Mills 1999) we lose sight of the factors that determine the conditions of their lives, for these come from elsewhere. In a sense, we study the effects and ignore the causes. However, to concentrate on those factors takes us far away from the docks and boats, the coffee houses and bars where anthropologists could do ethnographic fieldwork. It takes us instead to corporate reports and archives, to tables of numbers and abstractions that we cannot see, it takes us to those nowhere lands where there are no people, the systems that somehow exist in another dimension created by the cultural imagination, places like corporations and nations and agencies. And when we do find people there to talk to, they will be wearing silk blouses or neckties, and we feel uneasy when we try to wear their costume in order to blend in.

Labour, culture and consciousness

Wolf (1999) visualised a complex dynamic of the inter-workings of ideology, organisation of labour and disposition of products. After presenting historical and cultural material on each of three detailed examples, he concludes that the notion of culture is useful if we think about specific practices and understandings that people devise and use to deal with their circumstances. The concept of culture allows us to unify realms we might otherwise think of as separate: people's material relations with the world, social organisation and configurations of ideas. People, he says, use their ideas as guides to act upon

the world and change it, and as that activity changes the world and the social relations in which people are enmeshed, people reappraise their relations of power and their cultural constructs.

Wolf's approach is a variety of practice theory, which suggests that actions shape thought. Jean Lave (1996: 5) argues that, in acting, people often are engaged in 'helping each other to participate in changing ways in a changing world' in a continual process of learning. As Lave and Wenger (1991: 33) put it, 'agent, activity, and the world mutually constitute each other'. Practice theory suggests that 'priority, perspective and value are continuously and inescapably generated in activity' (Lave 1988: 181). To control activity, then, is to shape thought.

If we can specify the relations among structural, organisational or tactical, and interpersonal power – how the exercise of power organises settings, controls settings and shapes interpersonal action – we can show how power shapes activity and thus those patterns of thought we call culture. Thus we can move from the assertion that there is cultural hegemony, a dominant way of thinking about the world, to an understanding of how it operates by shaping daily activity and, through it, thought. Roy D'Andrade (1999: 100) moves us towards this understanding when he poses the question: 'culture is related to what, how?'. We need, then, to understand the relationships among social and economic systems, cultural forms and action. This is the issue in Wolf's last work (1999), where he answers D'Andrade's question by describing the relations among power, ideology, stratification and the allocation of labour, to show the role of power in defining the cultures that determine how people understand their situations and lives.

Along similar lines, Hannerz (1992, 1996) argues that people construct meanings from their location in social structures, which shape the flow of available experiences and intentions. 'Through the interaction of perspectives, culture is produced' (Hannerz 1992: 68). For Hannerz, then, as for D'Andrade and Wolf, concrete personal experiences are the basis for generalised understandings, and generalised understandings are frameworks for interpreting experiences. Shared meanings are tied to the specific experiences that people share in the settings in which they live their lives.

Suzan Erem and I have addressed these questions in our studies of local branches of labour unions in the United States. If class consciousness is the awareness of classes and their positions in economic and political systems, 'union consciousness' would be a similar awareness of unions among union members. We found that there was no relationship between union activism and union consciousness. This led me to conclude that how shop stewards think about the union is irrelevant to their level of activism (Durrenberger 1997). There was, however, a relationship between union consciousness and the place of the union in the organisation of worksites, though this is a dimension of the

structure of the workplace rather than a dimension of thought or cognition. We documented a shift in consciousness that accompanied a shift in the nature of the union at one worksite, from being instrumental and strong to being ineffective and weak. In the earlier state, members thought of themselves principally as union members; in the later, they saw themselves much closer to company management (Durrenberger and Erem 1999a).

Our findings illustrate the point made by Lave and Wenger (1991), that while abstractions do not change people's actions, changing the nature of concrete everyday life to involve them continuously in action does. This raises the question of the relationship between thought and action. Union members' awareness of their union is related to the structures of their worksites (Durrenberger 1997), and when the structures of everyday action change, members' patterns of thought change (Durrenberger and Erem 1999b). These findings support D'Andrade's (1999: 89) conclusion, that 'Cultural reality is more often reality-shaped than culturally constituted', and corroborate Barrett's observation (1999: 261) that 'social structure (or material culture) shapes people's lives at least partly independent of their consciousness'.

When I asked one group of shop stewards what accounts for people's problems on the job, they replied that the causes are, in descending order of importance, co-workers, supervisors and management policies. So, structural factors such as policies and laws do not seem as important, in their view, as personal factors. In their daily work-lives, stewards see their co-workers as the cause of many of the problems they have to deal with and supervisors as the reason for the rest. An external view might suggest that the causes of such problems could be structural. For example, workers may be unaware of a weakening of government health and safety regulations, or may suppose that this has no consequences for them. Put differently, the changes in regulations themselves may seem to have no direct impact on union members' lives, and workers may not think in terms of relations between workplace injuries and those regulations. However, when these changes are reflected in changes in company practice, grievances that derive from work-related injuries will increase, which will result in conflicts between supervisors and workers over the regulations.

Thus it is that everyday realities are more powerful in determining patterns of thought than those patterns are in determining the everyday realities of people's lives. For these shop stewards, the overwhelming everyday reality is 'keeping the peace' at work and enforcing contracts against an often hostile management and keeping their members from losing their jobs. That is where their energy goes, and there is little left over for political activism, for supporting friendly politicians and organising more workers. If the consciousness of these stewards can be said to be false, it is at least realistic, for it reflects the realities of power at their workplaces. If their consciousness

is false, it may not be so much because of the hegemony of a particular class–cultural perspective, but because of the ability of their employers to shape the daily lives of workers in their workplaces, realities that become encoded as patterns of thought.

Many of the most important determinants of these everyday realities reveal the use of power to pursue class interests as clearly as in any of Wolf's (1999) examples. In the United States, these include the moving of capital to low-wage countries and areas without organised labour, the shift to a service economy and the changes of law and administration that have moved unions towards being bureaucracies for handling quasi-legal cases (Durrenberger and Erem 1997a, 1997b). More direct examples of this use of power include the anti-union offensive of the 1970s and 1980s (Bronfenbrenner et al. 1998: 3) and the industry of consultants employed to keep enterprises union free (Levitt and Conrow 1993).

The chief goal of the union movement in industrial societies is to redress the structural imbalance and give some sense of agency to those who provide labour but do not necessarily control the conditions of its use. It does this by attempting to develop collective power based on structural principles other than wealth. Under normal working conditions there is no space for working-class solidarity (Fantasia 1988). Part of the reason is the gap between the day-to-day experience of union members in their workplaces and the power relations that determine those realities. Stewards do not think in terms of distant causes when they must resolve a workplace problem, when they have to 'keep the peace'. They think in terms of the immediate situation and personalities involved. They think in terms of individualistic models of consciousness and action, a powerful cultural model in the United States. So, while an outside analysis may indicate the strength of broader factors in framing conflict-ridden interactions between labour and management, the experience of stewards may indicate to them that individuals and personalities are stronger. However, stewards' experiences are in significant part the result of those broader factors, which end up putting stewards in the role of peace maker rather than representatives of workers, a role that determines the flow of experiences and intentions upon which they base the cultural models that inform their actions.

Conclusion

The ways labour is organised for production is important for defining a society's political and economic systems, and economic anthropologists have described the organisation of labour in societies of many different sorts. However, as capitalist systems have developed they have spread across the planet to influence the economic systems of most people, and in doing so have moved many people's experiences closer to that of the wage labourer in the

global economy. And since work is an important part of most people's lives, it is a central factor in determining their consciousness and the shape of their culture.

Notes

1. Marx's *Capital*, available in numerous editions, is a detailed unfolding of his understanding of the wage relationship in capitalism.
2. Recently Joseph Stiglitz (2002), an economist, has analysed the necessity for states to establish and maintain the markets and other relationships that are necessary for capitalism.

References

Apostle, R. and G. Barrett 1992. *Emptying their nets: small capital and rural industrialization in the Nova Scotia fishing industry*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Barboza, D. 2000. Goliath of the hog world: fast rise of Smithfield foods makes regulators wary. *New York Times* (7 April) Business Section: 1.

Barrett, S.R. 1999. Forecasting theory: problems and exemplars in the twenty-first century. In *Anthropological theory in North America* (ed.) E.L. Cerroni-Long. Westport, Conn.: Bergin & Garvey.

Bonanno, A. and D. Constance 1996. *Caught in the net: the global tuna industry, environmentalists, and the state*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas.

Bronfenbrenner, K., S. Friedman, R.W. Hurd, R.A. Oswald and R.L. Seeber 1998. Introduction. In *Organizing to win: new research on union strategies* (eds) K. Bronfenbrenner, S. Friedman, R.W. Hurd, R. Oswald and R.L. Seeber. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Cohen, L. and R.W. Hurd 1998. Fear, conflict, and union organizing. In *Organizing to win: new research on union strategies* (eds) K. Bronfenbrenner, S. Friedman, R.W. Hurd, R. Oswald and R.L. Seeber. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

D'Andrade, R. 1999. Culture is not everything. In *Anthropological theory in North America* (ed.) E.L. Cerroni-Long. Westport, Conn.: Bergin & Garvey.

Doeringer, P.B., P.I. Moss and D.G. Terkla 1986. *The New England fishing economy: jobs, income, and kinship*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.

Durrenberger, E.P. 1992a. Psychology, unions, and the law: folk models and the history of shrimpers' unions in Mississippi. *Human Organization* 51: 151–4.

Durrenberger, E.P. 1992b. *It's all politics: south Alabama's seafood industry*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Durrenberger, E.P. 1994. The history of shrimpers' unions in Mississippi, 1915–1955. *Labor's Heritage* 5 (3): 66–76.

Durrenberger, E.P. 1995. Mississippi unions again: facts, figures, and misrepresentations. *Human Organization* 54: 474–7.

Durrenberger, E.P. 1996. *Gulf Coast soundings: people and policy in the Mississippi shrimp industry*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas.

Durrenberger, E.P. 1997. That'll teach you: cognition and practice in a union local. *Human Organization* 56: 388–92.

Durrenberger, E.P. 2000. Explorations of class and consciousness in the U.S. *Journal of Anthropological Research* 57: 41–60.

Durrenberger, E.P. and S. Erem 1997a. Getting a raise: organizing workers in an industrializing hospital. *Journal of Anthropological Research* 53: 31–46.

Durrenberger, E.P. and S. Erem 1997b. The dance of power: ritual and agency among unionized American health care workers. *American Anthropologist* 99: 489–95.

Durrenberger, E.P. and S. Erem 1999a. The abstract, the concrete, the political, and the academic: anthropology and a labor union in the United States. *Human Organization* 58: 305–12.

Durrenberger, E.P. and S. Erem 1999b. The weak suffer what they must: a natural experiment in thought and structure. *American Anthropologist* 101: 783–93.

Durrenberger, E.P. and S. Erem 2000. When anthropology fails: stories from the ethnographic front. *Anthropology and Humanism* 25: 50–63.

Durrenberger, E.P. and N. Tannenbaum 2002. Chayanov and theory in economic anthropology. In *Theory in economic anthropology* (ed.) J. Ensminger. Walnut Creek, Cal.: AltaMira Press.
Durrenberger, E.P. and K. Thu 1997a. Introduction. In *Pigs, profits, and rural communities* (eds) K. Thu and E.P. Durrenberger. Albany: State University of New York Press.
Durrenberger, E.P. and K. Thu 1997b. Signals, systems, and environment in industrial food systems. *Journal of Political Ecology* 4: 27–38.
Fantasia, R. 1988. *Cultures of solidarity: consciousness, action, and contemporary American workers*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Gottschalk, M. 1998. *The shadow welfare state: labor, business, and the politics of health care in the United States*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
Griffith, D. 1993. *Jones's minimal: low-wage labor in the United States*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
Hannerz, U. 1992. *Cultural complexity*. New York: Columbia University Press.
Hannerz, U. 1996. *Transnational connections: culture, people, places*. New York: Routledge.
Hornberg, A. 2001. *The power of the machine*. Walnut Creek, Cal.: AltaMira Press.
Lave, J. 1988. *Cognition in practice*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
Lave, J. 1996. Practice of learning. In *Understanding practice: perspectives on activity and context* (eds) S. Chaiklin and J. Lave. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Lave, J. and E. Wenger 1991. *Situated learning: legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Levitt, M.J. and T. Conrow 1993. *Confessions of a union buster*. New York: Crown.
Marchak, P., N. Guppy and J. McMullan 1987. *Uncommon property: the fishing and fish-processing industries in British Columbia*. New York: Methuen.
Mills, M.B. 1999. *Thai women in the global labor force: consuming desires, contested selves*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
Mintz, S. 1985. *Sweetness and power: the place of sugar in modern history*. New York: Penguin.
Stiglitz, J. 2002. *Globalization and its discontents*. New York: W.W. Norton.
Vanneman, R. and L.W. Cannon 1987. *The American perception of class*. Philadelphia, Pa.: Temple University Press.
Wilson, P.A. 1992. *Exports and local development: Mexico's new maquiladoras*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
Wolf, E.R. 1997. *Europe and the people without history*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Wolf, E.R. 1999. *Envisioning power*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Zweig, M. 2001. *The working class majority: America's best kept secret*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

9 Industrial work

Jonathan Parry

Industrial work has had some bad press. Consider Charles Dickens's Coketown 'where the piston of the steam-engine worked monotonously up and down, like the head of an elephant in a state of melancholy madness'. Consider the 'robotisation' of the assembly-line worker, and the resigned monotony of a regime that imposes, in Jean-Paul Satre's acid formulation, 'a captive consciousness kept awake only the better to suppress itself' (quoted in Beynon 1973: 20). And remember that it is one thing to force people to come to work, and another to persuade them to work when they have come. How is that done?

Teleological narratives

Although from different theoretical positions, industrialisation is often represented as an inexorable process that has determinate effects on economy, society and culture. Industrial societies are qualitatively different from pre-industrial ones and, not withstanding their different starting points, converge on the same design. The English Industrial Revolution pioneered the path that others would tread. The implication once unblushingly drawn was that industrialisation in Africa and Asia would lead the late-starters along a trail blazed by Birmingham. Tribesmen would become townsmen; peasants would become proletarians. As Gluckman (1961: 68–9) famously claimed, 'an African townsman is a townsman, an African miner is a miner' who 'possibly resembles miners everywhere'.

Teleological narratives of this sort are not fashionable in contemporary anthropology. Culture must count that anthropologists may dine; and we find plenty of instances in which the expected transition to an urban–industrial way of life has not occurred, or is even reversed. When a pattern of circulatory migration between the countryside and the factories in town has persisted for more than a century, it is no longer clear that proletarian butterflies must emerge from peasant chrysalises (for example, de Haan 1994). And when Kanpur textile workers (Joshi 1999) and Zambian miners (Ferguson 1999) are forced back on half-forgotten ancestral villages, the reel of history seems to run backwards, from factory to field.

But even if the impetus to industrialism is reversible, and even if the way in which family life, and political and religious activity, is organised remains stubbornly different in different industrial societies, it is hard to deny Dore's

(1973: 11) premise that those institutions that surround the organisation of work will have the greatest tendency to converge, since they are most closely determined by technology. A second but related premise also seems plausible, at least at first sight: modern machine production imposes work regimes of a quite different character from those that existed before. According to the argument of one of E.P. Thompson's best-known essays (1991 [1967]), it created (or at least promoted) a new conception of time and a new kind of work discipline. In the pre-industrial world, work is task-oriented and governed by the rhythms of nature, and bouts of intense labour alternate with long periods of idleness. But modern industry is governed by abstract clock-time, which imposes a new kind work discipline and effects a new kind of differentiation between 'work' and 'life'. The main catalyst behind this revolutionary transformation is large-scale machine production that requires an elaborate synchronisation of tasks, and demands that plant be kept in constant operation in order to repay the capital invested in it.

In mid-eighteenth-century England, the household had characteristically been a production unit to which all of its members contributed.[1] By the middle of the nineteenth century, as the conventional story unfolds, factory production had created a split between the workplace and the home, work and leisure, and between a public and private sphere of life. The first came to stand for the egoistic values of the market; the second for the values of mutuality, reciprocity and community (see, for example, Carrier 1992, 1995). 'Work' was not only increasingly separated in time and space from the rest of life, but was also seen as a separate sphere of human activity associated with 'the economy', itself progressively marked out as a separate and autonomous domain (Dumont 1977; Polanyi 1957 [1944]). As women's and children's participation in the workforce declined as the century progressed,[2] it was also an increasingly masculine sphere. Many households came to depend on the wage of a single male bread-winner, and the loss of waged work acquired a new and more desperate meaning. It was only towards the end of the nineteenth century that 'the unemployed' became a distinct social category and 'unemployment' came to be seen as a pre-eminent social problem (Kumar 1988).

While rapid industrialisation in several Southeast Asian economies in the last quarter of the twentieth century was largely built on the cheap labour of young unmarried females (case studies are in Ong 1987; Wolf 1992), the gradual elimination of women from regular industrial employment was repeated in many older Third-World industries, like the Bengal jute mills (Sen 1999) and the Indian mines (Simeon 1999). In India especially, manual labour – particularly when performed for others – is held in low esteem, and the household's ability to withdraw its womenfolk from such employment is an important marker of its status and respectability. It is also, of course, an index

of material well-being. That too goes for unemployment, which is highest in India's most prosperous states. In the absence of state benefits, only the relatively advantaged can afford it (Holmström 1976: 51). Unless supported by other household members with regular employment, men and women who cannot find (or are made redundant from) factory jobs do not join the ranks of the unemployed but become hawkers, rag-pickers, casual labourers and the like. 'Housewife-isation' has not therefore been the invariable result of the decline in factory employment for women, and the trend towards it in Western countries has of course been significantly reversed in recent years. But the dominant historical trajectory during the first century of industrialisation was towards a narrowing of the definition of those deemed eligible (in terms of age and gender) for regular industrial jobs, and an expansion of the demands these placed on them in terms of discipline and regularity. The question of their consent to these demands becomes all the more pressing.

'Commitment' and the legacy of the past

The consent of neophyte industrial workers is often reluctant, or so their employers complain. In the United States, high levels of immigration supposedly meant that 'pre-modern' work attitudes persisted into the early twentieth century. In Pennsylvania mill and mining towns, a Polish wedding would last three to five days, while the Greeks had more than eighty holy days a year: 'non-industrial cultures and work habits regularly thrived and were nourished by new workers alien to the "Protestant" work ethic' (Gutman 1988: 126). Capital is not always as omnipotent as it seems.

In colonial Africa and Asia, the problem was seen as even more intractable. The 1931 *Report on the royal commission on labour in India* found that workers in industry had often been driven out of their rural homes by economic necessity, and had little enthusiasm for its discipline. The village remained the centre of their social and emotional life: hence their desultory work performance (Breman 1999a: 4–5). Nationalists blamed India's industrial backwardness on the British, but often internalised their teleological assumptions. Freed from the shackles of imperialism, India would rapidly 'progress' along the path to Western-style industrial modernity (which is just what Mahatma Gandhi feared). However, it soon became clear that these expectations were exaggerated. Echoing the old colonial stereotypes of the industrial worker as still a peasant at heart, the defective 'commitment' of labour got most of the blame.[3]

Morris (1960), however, dissented, arguing that labour performance reflected market conditions and employers' policies. The Bombay textile mills wanted workers who could be paid a pittance and hired and fired at will. Circular migration from field to factory and back again fitted with their fluctuating demand for cheap, flexible labour (see, more recently,

Chandavarkar 1994). So, far from creating a united working class, as the Marxists supposed it would, industrialisation in India has often reinforced the 'pre-industrial characteristics' of the workforce by buttressing dependence on kin, caste-mates and co-villagers (Chandavarkar 1994: 122). It is the strategies of capital that create the 'shortcomings' in labour of which capital so loudly complains.

The Marxists, as this reminds us, have their own teleological vision that produces its own variant on the problem of 'commitment': the workers' *lack* of commitment to unified political action in pursuit of their class interests. In India, as elsewhere, class unity and consciousness have emerged only ephemerally. The question is, 'why?'. The short answer is that the Indian working class is so deeply fragmented by two kinds of structural division that it reasonable to ask whether it is *a* working class. First, it is divided by 'primordial loyalties' carried over from the pre-industrial, pre-capitalist world: divisions of caste, religion and regional origin that led Chakrabarty (1989: 218) to conclude that the worker's 'incipient awareness of belonging to a class remained a prisoner of his pre-capitalist culture'. Second, they are divided by the way in which industrial production itself is segmented. Like many others, the Indian labour force is sometimes described as dual, bifurcated between those who work in what are variously labelled the formal and the informal economies, or the organised and unorganised sectors.[4] Those in the formal or organised sector are commonly an 'aristocracy of labour', whose lives and aspirations shade seamlessly into the middle classes (Holmström 1976; Parry 2003). Those in the informal or unorganised sector are generally down-trodden casuals (see Breman 1994, 1996).[5] The real question, then, is 'not so much why the working classes have failed to realise the expectations theoretically imputed to them but how and why at times they came together at all' (Chandavarkar 1994: 15).

It is not, of course, only for India that working-class consciousness can be questioned, witness Roberts's (1978) account of the distinctions of status and material condition that during his childhood pervaded even Friedrich Engels's 'classic' Lancashire slum. Nor is it only in India that labour commitment is influenced by the legacy of the past. In her study of women workers in large-scale state-run silk factories in the southern Chinese city of Hangzhou, Rofel (1997, 1999) argues that work attitudes and application are significantly a product of the history through which three different cohorts of workers have lived. With the Great Leap Forward (1958–60), women began to enter silk factories in large numbers and were treated as heroines of emancipated socialist labour, which made them highly desirable brides. Workers of this oldest cohort had 'accepted the socialist state's discourse that labor is the essence of meaningful identity' (1997: 169) and work with 'socialist diligence'. By contrast, those who came of age during the Cultural Revolution

learned to equate 'high political consciousness … with refusal to participate in production' (1997: 161) and are prone to ostentatious malingering and recalcitrance towards authority. With the economic reforms of the post-Mao period, the wind changed once more. The de-feminised worker of the Maoist era with her unisex clothes is now a figure of fun; hyper-femininity became the 'symbolic ground of a new liberation from socialism' (1999: 19). The minds of this youngest cohort are on other things, and carelessness and poor quality mar their work.

Ideas and practices inherited from the past can also provide an ideological resource that workers may tap to criticise or even resist industrial discipline. This is the argument of Nash's (1979) celebrated study of Bolivian tin miners, which attempts to resolve (with, perhaps, some element of wishful thinking) the Marxist problem of how an industrial proletariat can ever constitute a revolutionary force if they are alienated not only from the means of production, the products of their labour and the work process, but also from one another. Her answer is that they are not alienated in this last sense and that it is through their common commitment to a set of pre-Hispanic symbols and rituals that the miners are able to recreate their solidarity in opposition to management. Most importantly, their unity is sustained by shared beliefs in two pre-Conquest supernatural figures who survive in a new guise: Pachamama, now transmogrified into the Virgin Mary, who controls the fertility of the land; Tio, now transmogrified into the Christian devil, who is the Lord of the Mountain and the wealth it contains. Taussig's (1980) re-analysis of this data went further. These beliefs provide the miners with the material for a kind of proto-Marxian critique of capitalist relations of production. The pre-Conquest Tio may, for example, have been dangerous and capricious, but he was not the embodiment of pure evil that he later became. As the spirit guardian of the mines he is symbolically identified with their human owners, and now appears as a blond, red-faced, cigar-smoking Gringo in cowboy boots. Capitalists are revealed as the devil incarnate. Although Taussig's de-coding of this symbolism is open to criticism (see, for example, Harris 1989; Sallnow 1989), it is not hard to suppose that miners saw owners like that. During the colonial period, an estimated eight million Indians, many of them forced labour, lost their lives in the mines. Incredible wealth was extracted**,** but those who extracted it were a totally impoverished colonial lumpen proletariat (Taussig 1980: 201–3).

Coercion and consent

In circumstances like these, and those described by Allen (1994) for the coal mines on the Japanese island of Kyushu into the 1960s, it is easy to explain why workers work. They are physically coerced. Although it is true that violence and intimidation are now rarely regarded as best management

practice, even in the contemporary world it is striking how frequently management falls back on them when less crude methods of control break down.

Mostly, however, coercion is less direct. 'Free labour' is often considered to have been a precondition for the development of industrial capitalism. Workers must be legally free to dispose of their labour to whoever they like (that is, to sell it as a commodity on the market to the highest bidder); and free from ownership of the means of production. In other words, 'free' labour is labour which is coerced, not by institutions like slavery, but by the imperative that it exchange itself for a wage in order to live. Much of Karl Polanyi's masterwork, *The great transformation* (1957 [1944]; see Isaac chap. 1 supra), was concerned with the way in which the Industrial Revolution in England was an institutional revolution which made labour 'free'.

In many parts of the world, however, 'capitalistic' industries have utilised workers who are far from free. In fact, Sidney Mintz (1985: 47f.) has argued that, well *before* England's Industrial Revolution, Caribbean sugar plantations developed a system of industrial production worked by slave labour. Equally, much migrant labour owns some of the means of production: many have peasant holdings to fall back on. This is an advantage to capital that allows it to escape the costs of reproducing its own labour;[6] and a disadvantage in that it supposedly creates problems of 'commitment' and allows workers to sustain themselves during strikes.[7] Such a safety net partly explains why employers in small-scale Indian industries sometimes attempt to reduce the freedom of their workers through debt bondage (Breman 1999b; Engelshoven 1999; Gooptu 2001: chap. 2; Kapadia 1999), although this can backfire (De Neve 1999).

In the 1970s, the power-loom weaving industry in the south Indian town of Kumarapalayam was booming. Experienced labour was short and the employers started to offer advances (*baki*), intended to bind the workers to them until the debt was discharged. By the time of De Neve's fieldwork in the mid-1990s, a substantial advance, sometimes equivalent to more than six months' wages, was standard. But the strategy failed dismally. In bonding their workers, the owners bonded themselves. If they sacked an unsatisfactory worker they were liable to lose their advance, and they had little sanction against malingering. As a palliative they introduced piece-rates, subsequently supplemented by increased surveillance and physical intimidation. But bonded workers would nevertheless routinely abandon their employers for jobs in other workshops whose owners were prepared to advance a sum sufficient to pay off the worker's former boss and leave something over for the worker himself. Some would abscond to another town without discharging their debts.

As De Neve's employers discovered, work attendance and work performance are different things. Performance is influenced by many factors, including the conditions of work, the customary norms of the shop floor, peer

pressure, the authority and respect that workers concede to their foreman and line manager, and how they feel at the time. In order to extract maximum profit, capital is constrained to control the labour process ever more closely. The evolution of industrial work regimes, Braverman (1974) argues, is above all the evolution of tighter systems of control. In its earlier phases, this involved bringing workers together under a single roof and for set hours each day, closer supervision to ensure diligent application, and setting minimum production targets**.** But this had limits, as F.W. Taylor saw. He was the founder of the 'scientific management' movement, which began to attract serious notice in the 1890s (Braverman 1974: chap. 4). The problem, as Taylor identified it, was that workers knew too much, about how long it took to perform a given task, about short-cuts, about how to be appear to be working when they were 'soldiering' (marking time). The solution was to break jobs down into smaller and smaller tasks with standardised stop-watch times. This would allow capital to control the intensity of labour by instituting a quota and bonus system, and ultimately assembly lines run at a pace determined by management. It also allowed capital to replace skilled workers with relatively inexpensive unskilled ones. The result was a cheapening of labour, its progressive de-skilling, and a growing split between the conceptualisation and planning of work (a function of management) and its mindless execution.

The apotheosis of Taylorist principles is the moving assembly line, which Ford introduced first at their Detroit Highland Park plant in January 1914 (see Beynon 1973: chap. 1; Braverman 1974: 147f.; Miller 1992: pt 1). In three months, the assembly time for the Model T was one-tenth of what it had been. Previously the company had had an annual labour turnover so great that at any one time most workers were new at their jobs. That cost them dear. To stem this haemorrhage of labour while enforcing higher productivity standards, Ford cut working hours and doubled the wage to $5 a day. In reality, the base daily wage remained at $2.50, the rest being paid as part of a profit-sharing bonus to workers who showed themselves 'worthy' of it by demonstrating thrift, sobriety, proper morals and good work habits. Company investigators would routinely visit workers' homes, check their bank books, monitor their standards of cleanliness, and look for evidence of alcohol abuse, smoking and sinful sexual liaisons. Those found wanting were put back on probation (on $2.50 per day), and eventually fired. The results were immediate and dramatic. In 1915, labour turnover fell from 370 per cent to 16 per cent; productivity rose by 50 per cent. The new regime soon met, however, with overt resistance in the form of strikes, and covert resistance in the form of turpitude, defiance, disobedience and sabotage.

In response to such recalcitrance, management's reflex action is to increase its control and supervision of the workforce. Indeed, Ford's Sociology Department rapidly evolved from a supposed welfare department into a spying

and enforcement agency staffed by boxers and with underworld connections. It becomes a vicious circle: shirking, defiance and sabotage resulting in stricter surveillance, which in turn exacerbates the original problem. The workers react, and management react to their reactions. Taylorist principles sometimes proved harder to implement than Braverman implied.

Unskilled workers are, however, easier to replace and therefore more vulnerable; and employer interest in de-skilling has sometimes been a response to union militancy and has sometimes provoked it (Burawoy 1979a). But there are technical constraints on de-skilling some kinds of work (like the repair jobs in the San Francisco shipyards described by Blum 2000). Assembly-line systems are generally only feasible for mass production involving long production runs, and only make sense where labour, especially skilled labour, is relatively expensive in relation to capital. In many industrialising countries, even highly skilled workers are poorly paid, so capital's stake in de-skilling is diminished. Moreover, a significant proportion of the impoverished rural migrant workforce have no relevant skills to lose, and the application of Taylorist methods has rather been associated with the attempt to inculcate them (see, for example, Crisp 1983 on the Ghanaian gold mines).

In much of the Western world, the defiance generated by Taylorist methods has forced capital to introduce a less direct and transparent disciplinary regime that allows labour some autonomy. In his classic study of a machine shop in Chicago in the mid-1970s, Burawoy (1979b) describes how workers managed to wrest a good deal of surreptitious control over the intensity of their labour and subvert the directives of higher management. It was this latitude, he argues, that provided the basis for their consent. Crucial to it was the shop-floor culture of 'making out', producing something over the quota set for the shift, and so earning a bonus. 'Making out' was an almost obsessive preoccupation, and workers who ran similar machines would sit together at lunch to discuss how they had done that morning and what their prospects were for the rest of the day. But it is not monetary incentives that explain why workers play the game with such single-mindedness; the jobs they prefer are not necessarily the most remunerative ones. The key to their consent is, rather, their commitment to the game itself.

> The rewards of making out are defined in terms of the factors immediately relevant to the labor process – reduction of fatigue, passing time, relieving boredom, and so on – and factors that emerge from the labor process – the social and psychological rewards of making out on a tough job as well as the social stigma and psychological frustration attached to failing on a gravy job. (Burawoy 1979b: 85)

As a machine operator himself, Burawoy describes how he too was sucked into the game, intensified his labour and thereby cooperated with management

in the production of greater surplus value. 'Consent', he argues, 'is produced at the point of production'. 'Variations in the character and consciousness that workers bring with them to the workplace explain little about the variations in the activities that take place on the shop floor' (1979b: xii, 202).

Most anthropologists, trained in a discipline that insists on the links between different aspects of social life, would probably be suspicious of this claim. It is doubtful that it would have convinced Henry Ford or the many other industrial employers who have judged it necessary to control the domestic lives and leisure of their workers, and so ridden roughshod over the separation between 'work' and 'life' that the Industrial Revolution supposedly instituted in the West (see, for example, Dore 1973; Gill 2000; Parry 2001; Rofel 1999). Nor does Burawoy's proposition seem consistent with Fernandes's (1997: 119f.) discussion of the way in which neighbourhood conflicts are fought out on the shop floor of a Calcutta jute mill. Equally, conflict within the workplace may be mitigated by social bonds extraneous to it. That, at least, is what is suggested by Engelshoven's (1999) study of diamond ateliers in Surat, in the Indian state of Gujarat. Living and working conditions are harsh, and the industry has a reputation for physical violence. Owners and workers share, however, a common identity as members of a single upwardly-mobile caste; workers credit the owners with that rise, and dream of being like them one day. The result is consent.

Burawoy's discussion of the way in which shop-floor line management is forced by the practicalities to collude with workers in the game of making out – often in opposition to boardroom directives – does, however, ring true in the gargantuan public-sector Bhilai Steel Plant in central India. Line managers there have little coercive power, the working environment can be extraordinarily harsh and rates of absenteeism are high. Even though manning levels are generous, managers often have to ask workers to do jobs that are properly done by somebody in a superior grade, or to work beyond customary norms. Worker compliance is bought by middle-management acquiescence in the informal duty rosters that workers operate among themselves, and by the system of 'see offs' (days when the worker will be marked present when in fact he is not). Workers work in exchange for their ability to leave (or perhaps never appear) when their labour is not really required (Parry 1999).

Sometimes senior management seek to prevent such collusion by exploiting ethnic divisions – in the case of the Trinidad firm studied by Yelvington (1995: 24) by exploiting the distance and distrust between the white and East Indian male supervisory staff and the female, predominantly black workforce. Similarly, some Thai factories employ only Indian security guards (Parry 2003) and Malaysian electronics factories use Indian and Chinese supervisors (Ong 1987). In this last case, ethnic 'otherness' contributes to the sense of

oppression under the male gaze from which, Ong argues, the young, unmarried, Malay female labour force suffers.

Ong's account focuses on the spirit possession which afflicts this workforce and may result in insubordinate behaviour by 'spirits' towards their victims' supervisors. One large-scale incident in an American-owned factory in 1978 involved 120 operators whose assembly jobs required the use of microscopes, in the lenses of which spirits are sometimes seen. The factory had to shut down for three days while a *bomoh* (exorcist) was called in to sacrifice a goat. More generally, the demons lurk in the lavatories; and the danger is attributed to the filth of the toilets and sceptic tank. 'What', asks Ong (1987: 141), 'do episodic spirit visitations to factories disclose about the experiences of young peasant women assembling microchips?'. Are they 'a critique of capitalist relations' (in the manner of Taussig), or 'cultural protests against acts of de-humanisation?'.

In answer to these questions, Ong invokes the easy-going rhythms of 'traditional' village life and the task-oriented nature of peasant production in which young unmarried women go largely unsupervised. They are, however, subject to parental authority at home**,** though it is clear that the earnings of factory daughters have changed the balance of power within the household. Wages are withheld from fathers who remarry, brothers who refuse to work are criticised sharply and younger siblings come to rely on them for cash handouts, while the young women themselves become more brazen about boyfriends and increasingly insist on selecting their own spouses. Within the *family* context, then, factory employment is emancipatory.

That liberation is, however, limited and Ong suggests that these workers develop deep anxieties about their sexual reputations that are exacerbated by an increasingly strident public discourse about proper Muslim womanhood. It is, moreover, bought at the cost of a new, more sinister and far-reaching oppression in a world of work that is quite unlike anything in *kampung* life. At the bottom of a rigid hierarchy, they are required to perform mindless repetitive tasks in a production process of which they have little understanding; and are subject to an inflexible time discipline and the constant surveillance of male supervisors who might harass them sexually and spy on them in the toilets, and who are deeply suspect ethnic 'aliens'. All this engenders resistance in the form of minor acts of sabotage, weeping fits and long absences in the toilets or prayer room, the very places where they are likely to be seized by ghosts. Echoing Nash on the counter-hegemonic potential of non-capitalist imagery**,** it is these that Ong emphasises. Drawn from 'traditional' Malay cosmology, beliefs about possession are pressed into service as an unconscious mode of resisting factory discipline. Spirit possession episodes are a kind of sublimated protest against the meaninglessness of industrial production and the rigidities of its work routines; against oppressive

male supervision and the devaluation of women's labour. They are not, that is, so much part of a class struggle as of a gender struggle: not capitalism, but men and industry, are the root of the problem.

Ong's rather slight ethnography might, however, equally support a different interpretation, one that she herself comes close to in a subsequent article (Ong 1988). Rather than being a sublimated protest against male control, it seems just as plausible to suggest that spirit afflictions are a somatisation of the women's uneasy consciences about escaping from proper male authority at home. After all, it is not spirits from Milwaukee or Osaka who attack them, but spirits from their villages, and in Malay culture it is characteristically women who resist their 'proper' roles who get possessed. But if spirit afflictions are really an oblique acknowledgement of the dangers of rejecting male protection and of becoming improper, un-Islamic, women, it is hard to construe them as 'resistance'. And even if that is what they are, they are plainly counterproductive. Malay theory says that women are prone to possession because they are spiritually weak, physically polluted and oversexed. So possession proves their inferiority. Management, moreover, medicalises the problem. The pay *is* lousy and conditions *are* rotten; the workers retaliate, according to Ong, by spirit possession. But management says that this shows they are psychologically ill, and fires workers who are repeatedly possessed on the grounds that it is irresponsible to have crazy people in states of bodily dissociation around potentially dangerous machines. In short, and as Ong's (1988) article recognises, spirit possession lets management off the hook by allowing it to claim that the real problem (objective conditions) is not the 'real' problem, which is female hysteria. If 'resistance', as the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* defines it, is 'the opposition offered by one body to the pressure or movement of another', it is hard to discern it here. Capital seems to suffer little friction in its well-oiled quest after profit.

It is certainly striking how many other groups of industrial workers ignore, or suppress, what we might see as the more objective dangers of their jobs. This is true, not only of workers in the impoverished Third World, where the choice is between silent acquiescence and starvation, but also in some of the most modern industries in the West. Take Zonabend's (1993) study of workers at the nuclear industries located on the Cotentin peninsula in Normandy, France, particularly the nuclear reprocessing and stockpiling centre at La Hague. The plant prefers to hire the children of existing employees. Working for it is a family business and this discourages awkward questions. The most awkward is the most obvious. Are people safe? Interred beneath the floor of the plant is nuclear waste, the radioactivity of which may take 24,000 years to lose half of its intensity. Many decontamination jobs are done by temporary contract workers. The contracts are subject to competitive tender, encouraging

short-cuts that endanger safety. In other jobs, the worker is a mere adjunct to the machine, the work is mindlessly boring and the very real dangers are entirely invisible. Risks are run as an antidote to tedium.

Asked about them, plant workers talk like official publications and in a completely de-personalised way. Alternatively, the danger is recognised, only to be displaced elsewhere: Chernobyl is an endless topic of conversation, the invariable conclusion to which is that 'it couldn't happen here'. At home they do not talk about work at all. Doctors and nurses in the area report that nobody enquires about a possible link between illness and occupation. Those with cancer symptoms refuse to go to the doctor, and once the disease is diagnosed will not sign the papers which will get the illness recognised as an occupational disease. It is a culture of denial that is abetted by the company, whose training course informs new workers that mineral water is 'much more radioactive' and that 'the population of Sweden is far more exposed' (1993: 87). But beneath the surface, anxiety lurks. There are endless rumours about childbirth and fertility: not a foetus is miscarried without somebody attributing it to *le nucléaire*.

So how are worries displaced? Zonabend points to the language and metaphors that are used to talk about nuclear power. The training film shown to new employees relates how, at the dawn of the world, it was radioactive radiation that allowed life to emerge. Complex and dangerous processes are likened to what goes on in a pressure cooker, or to other culinary and feminised imagery. The dangers are trivialised and male workers respond by developing their own metaphors and tricks of language in an attempt to recover a more flattering and masculine self-image.

These include workers' classification of the workforce into two polar types. The first are the *kamikazes*, who scorn danger and take risks and short-cuts; 'real men' who refute popular notions about the endangered virility of the nuclear worker. Their opposite are the *rentiers*, cautious family types who manage their dose-capital carefully. While *kamikazes* press management for more money, *rentiers* press for greater safety. Crucially, *kamikazes* tend to work in mechanical jobs, where the chief danger is irradiation: the 'dose' consists of rays, which suggest warmth and radiance. The image is one of cleanliness, strength and light, like the burn of strong alcohol with which the manly fortify themselves. As the true soldiers of nuclear energy, the *kamikaze* takes his dose like a man, for language and metaphor have transformed radioactivity into male energy and sexual potency. By contrast, the *rentiers* tend to work in chemical parts of the plant, where the danger is contamination from radioactive dust particles, a less heroic foe that conjures up the image of filth, pollution and decay. The wife of the worker who has caught a dose refuses to sleep with him; the husband responds by concealing his pollution; the result is mistrustful repression and silence at home. At work, the *rentier*

becomes even more cautious and may resort to magic, seeing the instruments worn to measure contamination as a protection against it. It is through such symbolic stratagems and tricks of language, Zonabend suggests, that people manage to deny the risk and uncertainty that eat at them silently; and it is the opacity and ambiguity that these create that secure their consent.

In other instances, however, workers make their jobs tolerable by exaggerating, rather than denying, their danger, as Vialles (1994) shows in her ethnography of French abattoirs. The slaughter is done on an industrial scale and with meticulous efficiency. It is anonymous, invisible and supposedly humane. The animals are herded into a narrow race with walls on both sides, through which they can only pass in single file. The animal comes to a dead-end; a partition descends behind it; a worker leans over the pen and stuns it with a bolt-pistol that perforates its skull. The comatose animal is then tipped down a ramp and a second worker hoists it up by one leg with a cable attached to an overhead track, and cuts its neck to drain it of blood. All this takes place in a space that is shielded from the view of the other workers who will process the carcass, an assembly-line operation of ten to twelve steps that progressively rid it of traces of its individual animality.

The interesting point is the way in which this division of labour allows workers to evade meaning. Even the identity of the slaughterer is muddied. Is it the stunner or the bleeder? It is as if the beast is already dead when it is bled, and the workers themselves are confused. Further down the line, the fragmentation of tasks reduces awareness; and *pace* Braverman, this fragmentation, the de-skilling of labour and the separation between conception and execution, has a rather benign aspect here. The mind-numbing quality of work and the lack of identification with the job are a boon. It is perhaps no coincidence that the first moving industrial production lines were in the Chicago abattoirs.

In the old days, bovines were stunned by being pole-axed, which was dangerous if botched; but with the bolt-pistol and the stunning pen (known as ‘the trap’) the risk is now minimal. The workers, however, inflate it. In hunting, there is an element of personalised combat between animal and man, and some danger. In the domestic slaughter of animals there is an exchange between farmer and animal, of nurture and care for eventual meat. In the abattoir there is only an anonymous beast and the treachery of the trap. It is bad conscience, then, that prompts workers to try to restore some semblance of fairness and to mitigate that treachery by exaggerating the risks that they run.

The not so nostalgic worker?

There is no denying that industrial jobs are often tedious and physically taxing, and that many of them are performed under conditions that are coercive,

exploitative and dangerous. But it is also important to recognise that a factory job is often regarded as infinitely preferable to a job in the informal urban economy or to work on the land. One of the premises from which we started was E.P. Thompson's presumption of a radical difference between industrial work regimes and those characteristic of the pre-modern world. It is now time to acknowledge that, for many neophyte proletarians in many parts of the world, the fields were never so happy nor the mills so dark and satanic.

Nor is it clear that factory work always marks a sharp break with the peasant past. According to Smith (1986), peasants in Japan of the Tokugawa period (before 1868) already had an acute and morally-loaded sense of time as something fleeting and precious to be put to good productive use. Peasant agriculture (like Thompson's factory) required a close synchronisation of tasks and farming manuals laid great stress on the elaborate planning of agricultural operations. Crops had to be carefully matched to the soil types of particular fields, and this required meticulous scheduling to ensure that crucial labour-intensive operations did not overlap. Work was regular throughout the year and there is little evidence of the alternating bouts of intense labour and the long periods of leisure that Thompson emphasises. Although there was plenty of industrial strife in early Japanese factories, by contrast with England at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution very little of it was about the control and management of time. Time discipline did not need to be imposed on a workforce that was not wedded to the 'humane' and 'natural' rhythms of Thompson's pre-industrial work regime.

With Thompson in mind, at the beginning of my own fieldwork in the new steel town of Bhilai, I regularly tried to prod my informants into telling me how oppressive is a life ruled by the clock and the factory siren, and into indulging their nostalgia for the happy world of the paddy fields (Parry 1999). I was soon disabused. Agricultural labour is now regarded with deep distaste, and even unemployed youngsters resolutely refuse to so much as supervise the work of day labourers in the fields, let alone work in them themselves. As the young see it, peasant agriculture is emblematic of the rustic world of their illiterate fathers, and their elders agree that factory work is light by comparison with back-breaking toil in agriculture. In fact, few jobs in the steel plant could be described as a remorseless grind. Time-keeping is flexible, tasks are intermittent and there is plenty of opportunity to play dice or cards, read a romance, have tea with one's mates or catch up on some sleep. Some jobs, it is true, are remarkably tough, but the amount of the working day which is spent on them is not, rarely more than two or three hours in a shift. The tyranny of the clock is not so oppressive, and workers are able to organise their own informal duty rosters. As Pinney (1999: 105) describes for another industrial complex in central India, it is 'those who do not clock in at the factory that are most concerned with its dreadful consequences'.

According to conventional wisdom, relaxed work regimes of this sort are an aberration of the Indian *public* sector. My experience of a large private-sector engineering firm in Bhilai, however, suggests that the contrast is less marked than is popularly supposed. Although management does its best to impose a regime of incessant productive activity, its success is unspectacular and for many the working day is punctuated by long fallow periods. This has less to do with the 'work culture' of an Indian proletariat still habituated to the rhythms of peasant agriculture, than with the fact that a great deal of industrial production inevitably proceeds in a staccato fashion and continuous work-flows are difficult to sustain (Chandavarkar 1994: 337). That, at least, is the case in the factory's foundry shop. In the machine shop, by contrast, the continuous vigilance of the operator is required (even if that permits chatting with his neighbours), while in the fettling shop, work really is a ceaseless grind. The extreme is assembly-line production run on Taylorist principles, and it was on the line in a cigarette factory and a distillery that I encountered regimes that most perfectly exemplify the picture of a working day governed by the remorselessly repetitive demands of the machine. In short, different types of industrial process are associated with different intensities of labour and impose work disciplines of different degrees of rigour (compare Blauner 1964). Thompson's stark contrast between work in the fields and the factory not only romanticises the former but also relies on an oversimplified homogenisation of what work is like in the latter.

What, then, of Ong's Thompson-esque view of the way in which her informants experience the world of work, the contrast between the contentment of the fields where they share jokes at the expense of absent males and find fulfilment in a task well done, and the interminable factory day with eye glued to a microscope while under the lascivious gaze of its supervisors, and with the dangerous necessity of visiting its demon-infested latrines? Certainly, young factory women in other parts of Southeast Asia suffer differently. In Wolf's (1992) Javanese study, those recruited from rural areas are already well used to self-exploitation in the paddy fields in which poverty forces them to work in defiance of exponentially diminishing returns. And they are used to exploitation, whether that of the old Javanese aristocracy, the Dutch or the Japanese occupying army. Industrial capitalism is just the latest variant on the same old extractive relationship. Nor is there any radical transition from flexible, meaningful, task-oriented agricultural work to the oppressive compulsions of factory labour. A factory job enables them to escape familial surveillance, flirt with young men and exchange experiences with girls from elsewhere. It is better than agricultural labour because they do not have to work in the sun and can keep their skin white; and above all because they can now afford soap. Factory work, as they see it, is the best option open to them and it gives them a new sense of self-worth. That this is

often the case explains a good deal about the consent of such workers in many parts of the newly industrialising world.

Notes

1. Part 1 of Pahl (1988) provides an extremely useful source on, and qualification to, the very broad-brush picture offered here.
2. Important discussions of the impetus behind this decline are provided by Humphries (1988) and McBride (1992); on France, see Scott (1987); for a cautionary critique, see Berg (1988).
3. Subsequent studies also gave little support to the undercommitment thesis. Lambert (1963), in fact, identified one of the most salient problems as *over*commitment. Workers tended to treat their jobs as their hereditary right, as many supposedly are in the caste-based division of labour in the village (that is, in the so-called *jajmani* system; see Harriss chap. 33 infra). Sheth (1968) found no conflict between traditional village ties and factory discipline, and Sharma (1974) reported that urban workers who were union members were more likely to be absentees than rural workers who were not. For useful reviews, see Breman (1999a) and Holmström (1984: chap. 2).
4. The formal sector consists of fairly large-scale, bureaucratically organised, capital-intensive modern factories subject to state regulation, with a workforce that tends to be unionised, relatively highly skilled and well paid. The informal sector consists of small-scale, labour-intensive firms with a workforce that is predominantly casual and weakly unionised, with little security or legal protection. In India, this dichotomy is given legal form in the distinction between the organised and unorganised sectors. A factory which employs ten or more workers, and which utilises power-driven machinery, belongs to the organised sector and is subject to statutory employment regulation, though there is, of course, lots of evasion.
5. In reality this dualistic picture is greatly oversimplified, since within each of these broad divisions there are several important gradations and since the different kinds of worker are often related by kinship and neighbourhood ties (see Holmström 1984). But this only compounds the analytical (and political) problem of unity.
6. The costs, for example, of socialising the next generation of workers and of supporting those it no longer needs.
7. Cooper's (1992) analysis of the imposition of a new kind of labour regime on the Mombasa docks in colonial Kenya argues that management pursued labour policies intended to undercut the semi-autonomy of workers with smallholdings, and so produce a more compliant labour force. Management sought to de-casualise dock labour and ensure that it became fully committed to the *urban* economy. The calculation was that dockers would only fear the sack when their livelihoods exclusively depended on well-paid, relatively secure employment. The consequence was the creation of an enclave of secure, highly paid and disciplined workers cut off from the rest of the labour force. The result, in other words, was the kind of dualism between an aristocracy of labour and other segments of the working class that is characteristic of so many Third-World economies.

References

Allen, M. 1994. *Undermining the Japanese miracle: work and conflict in a coalmining community*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Berg, M. 1988. Women's work, mechanization and the early phase of industrialization in England. In *On work: historical, comparative and theoretical approaches* (ed.) R.E. Pahl. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Beynon, H. 1973. *Working for Ford*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Blauner, R. 1964. *Alienation and freedom: the factory worker and his industry*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Blum, J. 2000. Degradation without deskilling: twenty-five years in the San Francisco shipyards. In *Global ethnography: forces, connections and imaginations in a postmodern world* (eds) M. Burawoy, J.A. Blum, G. Sheba, Z. Gille, T. Gowan, L. Haney, M. Klawiter, S.H. Lopez, S. Riain and M. Thayer. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Braverman, H. 1974. *Labor and monopoly capital: the degradation of work in the twentieth century*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
Breman, J. 1994. *Wage hunters and gatherers: search for work in the urban and rural economy of south Gujarat*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
Breman, J. 1996. *Footloose labour: working in India's informal economy*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
Breman, J. 1999a. The study of industrial labour in post-colonial India – the formal sector: an introductory review. *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 33 (1 & 2): 1–41.
Breman, J. 1999b. The study of industrial labour in post-colonial India – the informal sector: a concluding review. *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 33 (1 & 2): 407–31.
Burawoy, M. 1979a. The anthropology of industrial work. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 8: 231–66.
Burawoy, M. 1979b. *Manufacturing consent: changes in the labour process under monopoly capitalism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Carrier, J.G. 1992. Emerging alienation in production: a Maussian history. *Man* 27: 539–58.
Carrier, J.G. 1995. *Gifts and commodities: exchange and Western capitalism since 1700*. London: Routledge.
Chakrabarty, D. 1989. *Rethinking working class history: Bengal 1890–1940*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Chandavarkar, R. 1994. *The origins of industrial capitalism in India: business strategies and the working classes in Bombay, 1900–1940*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Cooper, F. 1992. Colonizing time: work rhythms and labour conflict in colonial Mombasa. In *Colonialism and culture* (ed.) N. Dirks. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
Crisp, J. 1983. Productivity and protest: scientific management in the Ghanaian gold mines, 1947–1956. In *Struggle for the city: migrant labor, capital, and the state in urban Africa* (ed.) F. Cooper. London: Sage.
de Haan, A. 1994. *Unsettled settlers: migrant workers and industrial capitalism in Calcutta*. Hilversum: Verloren.
De Neve, G. 1999. Asking for and giving *baki*: neo-bondage, or the interplay between bondage and resistance in the Tamilnadu power-loom industry. *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 33 (1 & 2): 379–406.
Dore, R. 1973. *British factory – Japanese factory: the origins of national diversity in industrial relations*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Dumont, L. 1977. *From Mandeville to Marx: the genesis and triumph of economic ideology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Engelshoven, M. 1999. Diamonds and Patels: a report on the diamond industry of Surat. *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 33 (1 & 2): 353–77.
Ferguson, J. 1999. *Expectations of modernity: myths and meanings of urban life on the Zambian Copperbelt*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Fernandes, L. 1997. *Producing workers: the politics of gender, class and culture in the Calcutta jute mills*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
Gill, T. 2000. '*Yoseba*' and '*ninpudashi*': changing patterns of employment on the fringes of the Japanese economy. In *Globalization and social change in contemporary Japan* (eds) J.S. Eades, T. Gill and H. Befu. Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press.
Gluckman, M. 1961. Anthropological problems arising from the African industrial revolution. In *Social change in modern Africa* (ed.) A.W. Southall. London: Oxford University Press.
Gooptu, N. 2001. *The politics of the urban poor in early twentieth-century India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Gutman, H.G. 1988. Work, culture and society in industrialising America, 1815–1919. In *On work: historical, comparative and theoretical approaches* (ed.) R.E. Pahl. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
Harris, O. 1989. The earth and the state: the sources and meanings of money in northern Potosí, Bolivia. In *Money and the morality of exchange* (eds) J. Parry and M. Bloch. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Holmström, M. 1976. *South Indian factory workers: their life and their world*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Holmström, M. 1984. *Industry and inequality: the social anthropology of Indian labour*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Humphries, J. 1988. Protective legislation, the capitalist state and working class men: the case of the 1842 Mines Regulation Act. In *On work: historical, comparative and theoretical approaches* (ed.) R.E. Pahl. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Joshi, C. 1999. Hope and despair: textile workers in Kanpur in 1937–8 and the 1990s. *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 33 (1 & 2): 171–203.

Kapadia, K. 1999. Gender ideologies and the formation of rural industrial classes in South India today. *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 33 (1 & 2): 329–52.

Kumar, K. 1988. From work to employment and unemployment: the English experience. In *On work: historical, comparative and theoretical approaches* (ed.) R.E. Pahl. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Lambert, R.D. 1963. *Workers, factories and social change in India*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

McBride, T. 1992. Women's work and industrialization. In *The Industrial Revolution and work in nineteenth century Europe* (ed.) L.R. Berlanstein. London: Routledge.

Miller, G.J. 1992. *Managerial dilemmas: the political economy of hierarchy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mintz, S. 1985. *Sweetness and power: the place of sugar in modern history*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Morris, M.D. 1960. The labour market in India. In *Labour commitment and social change in developing areas* (eds) W.E. Moore and A.S. Feldman. New York: Social Science Research Council.

Nash, J. 1979. *We eat the mines and the mines eat us: dependency and exploitation in Bolivian tin mines*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Ong, A. 1987. *Spirits of resistance and capitalist discipline: factory women in Malaysia*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Ong, A. 1988. The production of possession: spirits and the multinational corporation in Malaysia. *American Ethnologist* 15: 28–42.

Pahl, R.E. (ed.) 1988. *On work: historical, comparative and theoretical approaches*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Parry, J.P. 1999. Lords of labour: working and shirking in Bhilai. *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 33 (1 & 2): 107–40.

Parry, J.P. 2001. Ankalu's errant wife: sex, marriage and industry in contemporary Chhattisgarh. *Modern Asian Studies* 35: 783–820.

Parry, J.P. 2003. Nehru's dream and the village 'waiting room': long-distance labour migrants to a central Indian steel town. *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 37 (1 & 2): 217–49.

Pinney, C. 1999. On living in the kal(i)yuga: notes from Nagda, Madhya Pradesh. *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 33 (1 & 2): 77–106.

Polanyi, K. 1957 (1944). *The great transformation: the political and economic origins of our time*. Boston, Mass.: Beacon.

Roberts, R. 1978. *The classic slum: Salford life in the first quarter of the century*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Rofel, L. 1997. Rethinking modernity: space and factory discipline in China. In *Culture, power, place: explorations in critical anthropology* (eds) A. Gupta and J. Ferguson. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Rofel, L. 1999. *Other modernities: gendered yearnings in China after socialism*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Sallnow, M. 1989. Precious metals in the Andean moral economy. In *Money and the morality of exchange* (eds) J. Parry and M. Bloch. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Scott, J. 1987. 'L'ouvrière! Mot impie, sordide ...': Women workers in the discourse of French political economy, 1840–60. In *The historical meanings of work* (ed.) P. Joyce. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sen, S. 1999. *Women and labour in late colonial India: the Bengal jute industry*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sharma, B.R. 1974. *The Indian industrial worker: issues in perspective*. Delhi: Vikas Publishing House.
Sheth, N.R. 1968. *The social framework of an Indian factory*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
Simeon, D. 1999. Work and resistance in the Jharia coalfield. *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 33 (1 & 2): 43–75.
Smith, T.C. 1986. Peasant time and factory time in Japan. *Past and Present* 111: 165–97.
Taussig, M. 1980. *The devil and commodity fetishism in South America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
Thompson, E.P. 1991 (1967). Time, work discipline and industrial capitalism. In *Customs in common*, E.P. Thompson. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
Vialles, N. 1994. *Animal to edible*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press / Paris: Éditions de la maison des sciences de l'homme.
Wolf, D. 1992. *Factory daughters: gender, household dynamics, and rural industrialization in Java*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Yelvington, K. 1995. *Producing power: ethnicity, gender, and class in a Caribbean workplace*. Philadelphia, Pa.: Temple University Press.
Zonabend, F. 1993. *The nuclear peninsula*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press / Paris: Éditions de la maison des sciences de l'homme.

10 Money: one anthropologist's view

Keith Hart

Most anthropologists don't like money and they don't have much of it. It symbolises the world they have rejected for something more authentic elsewhere. It lines them up with the have-nots and against the erosion of cultural diversity by globalisation. As a result, anthropologists have not had much of theoretical interest to say about money. Rather, they have been limited to discussing whether primitive valuables are money or not. Thus Bronislaw Malinowski (1921: 13; see Strathern and Stewart chap. 14 infra) was adamant that Trobriand *kula* valuables were *not* money in that they did not function as a medium of exchange and standard of value. But Marcel Mauss (1990 [1925]: 100) held out for a broader conception that goes beyond the kind of money we are familiar with:

> On this reasoning … there has only been money when precious things ... have been really made into currency – namely have been inscribed and impersonalised, and detached from any relationship with any legal entity, whether collective or individual, other than the state that mints them … One only defines in this way a second type of money – our own.

He suggests (1990 [1925]: 101) that primitive valuables are like money in that they 'have purchasing power and this power has a figure set on it'.

This was the high point in anthropologists' discussion of money. Mauss's line was generally not taken up and, thereafter, economic anthropologists used concepts drawn from Western folk wisdom rather than from economics.[1] Parry and Bloch (1989) show how non-Western peoples incorporate modern money creatively into their indigenous social practices, but the editors' introduction has nothing to say about money in their own societies, the culture of which most of us absorb with our mother's milk. This lack of self-consciousness is a serious handicap. If ethnographic research is to help people understand the world we live in, we must be more open to studying mainstream modern institutions and the intellectual history of relevant disciplines outside ours (Hart 1986). Some individuals have done this, notably Carrier (1994, 1997), Gregory (1982, 1997) and Gudeman (1986, 2001; Gudeman and Rivera 1990). Chris Gregory's *Savage money* (1997) is an exceptional attempt to frame ethnographic research within an account of the upheavals in world money since the 1970s.

Accordingly, I have not attempted here to review the field (see Weatherford

1997), but rather to present four short sections on money drawing partly on a recent synthetic book (Hart 2001).[2] The first of these addresses the widespread idea, perpetuated by economists among others, that money originates in barter (see Hart 1987; see Heady chap. 16 infra). The second dissects the anthropologists' own favourite folk myth about how money undermines traditional cultures. The third examines why money matters so much for the members of capitalist societies, to the point of becoming an object of religious devotion. Finally, I present my own approach to modern money, taking the introduction of the euro as an example.

The barter origins of money

By now everyone knows where money came from. Our remote ancestors started swapping things they had too much of and others wanted. This barter ran into a bottleneck. It was not always easy to find someone who wanted what you had and had what you wanted in the right quantities. So some objects became valued as tokens that most people would be willing to hold to swap with something else in future. It might be salt or ox hides, but some metals were most often used in this way because they were scarce, attractive, useful, durable, portable and divisible. The restrictions of barter were lifted as soon as sellers would regularly accept these money tokens, knowing that they could be exchanged at any time. The money stuff succeeded because it was the supreme barter item, valued not only as a commodity in itself, but also as a ready means of exchange.

This is a myth of course. What does it tell us? That money is a real thing and a scarce commodity. That it rose to prominence because it was more effective than existing practice. That it originated in barter, the timeless 'primitive' form of exchange. What else does it tell us, about society, for instance? Well, almost nothing. When Adam Smith first told this story he claimed that the 'wealth of nations' resulted from the slow working out of a deep-seated propensity in human nature, 'to truck, barter and exchange one thing for another'. He went on:

> It is common to all men, and to be found in no other race of animals, which seem to know neither this nor any other species of contracts … Nobody ever saw a dog make a fair and deliberate exchange of one bone for another with another dog. Nobody ever saw one animal by its gestures and natural cries signify to another, this is mine, that yours; I am willing to give this for that. (Smith 1961 [1776]: 17)

Smith acknowledged a degree of social complexity in the transactions: the idea of contract, private property (mine and yours) and equivalence (fairness), none of which could plausibly be traced to the non-human world. His latter-day successors have not shown similar modesty, routinely claiming that the markets of *fin de siècle* Wall Street are animated by impulses that are not just

eternally human, but shared with the animals too, or at least the primates (Dunbar 2000: 2–3). Traders are unusual people (Hicks 1969). They own things they neither made nor will use, but still claim the right to the value of their sale. They are willing to give up their goods in return for payment; and their customers then have the right to do what they like with them. This is so commonplace in our world that we think of it as eternal. It is in fact quite rare within the range of known human societies. What gives buyer and seller confidence that they each have exclusive rights to dispose of the commodity? The power of state law reinforces their contract and usually supports the money involved. They can operate as isolated individuals only because of the huge social apparatus backing their exchange.

If trading with money is a special institution, how else have people circulated objects between themselves? In barter, two parties exchange goods taken to be equivalent; the timing and the quantities must be right; both sides must have the right to dispose of their goods without involving others; there is a risk of conflict in haggling. How much simpler to persuade you to give up your goods in return for money that you can hold for purchases from others in different times and places. But it is not convincing that such a complicated arrangement as barter would prevail before people thought of inventing money.

Barter is often found where markets using money prices are ineffective, usually because of a shortage of liquidity. Thus the Argentinians, in the recent currency crisis, flocked to barter clubs. People had a fair idea of what their goods were worth because of the co-existent markets they were too poor to participate in. In the North American fur trade in the eighteenth century, which gave Smith his example of 'primitive' barter, the ratio of beaver to deer skin was broadly set by the world market, but cash was scarce on the frontier. Nigeria and Brazil, being short of foreign currency, once arranged to barter oil for manufactures, knowing the price of each on world markets. One of the fastest-growing sectors of trade today is commercial barter networks, allowing businesses, for a commission, to swap unsold goods directly between themselves.

Barter does not require faith in any currency or other medium, and it is easy to conceive of barter as markets without money. What you see is what you get. More important, it allows trade to continue when the currency is lacking. It is cumbersome because both sides of the swap have to coincide. Apart from that, barter resembles normal trading quite closely, especially in its assumptions about property relations. Perhaps this is what recommended it to the economists as a possible precursor of markets proper. Apart from the missing money, everything is business as usual, especially the condition of exclusive private property in the goods traded. Barter is not much of an alternative then, just an inferior market mechanism.

I have been struck by the tenacity with which ordinary people cling to the barter origin myth of money. Can this merely be an example of John Maynard Keynes's (1936: 383) famous claim that our ideas are nothing more than the echoes of a defunct economist's theory? A Sudanese friend once asserted that the original economic system of his country was barter between villages; and then, when pushed, he admitted that these villages had been involved with merchant networks and money for thousands of years. It would be more plausible to locate the origins of exchange in the gift, as Mauss (1990 [1925]) suggested. But this would give priority to a personalised conception of money, seeing markets as a form of symbolic human activity rather than as the circulation of dissociated objects between isolated individuals. The general appeal of the barter origin myth is that it leaves the notion of the private property complex undisturbed.

The impact of money on traditional cultures

Consistent with this vision, every anthropology student knows that money undermines the integrity of cultures that were hitherto resistant to commerce. Anthropologists are not very happy in the marketplace and this gives many of them a jaundiced perspective on money. The American sociologist Thorstein Veblen (1957 [1918]) once wrote a book to explain how capitalist societies could permit the pursuit of truth in their universities. He concluded that the solution was to persuade academics that they belonged to the elite while paying them the wages of manual workers. They then compromised themselves pursuing the additional income needed to maintain a lifestyle they could not afford. Academics are obsessed with money and loathe it, because they never have enough of it.

This 'obsolete anti-market mentality' (Cook 1966) flourishes among the disciples of Karl Polanyi (1944) of whom the doyen was Paul Bohannan (1955, 1959; see Isaac chap 1. supra). His articles remain the main reference for anthropological discussion of money economy and its presumed antithesis. Before being colonised by the British around 1900, the Tiv maintained a mixed farming economy on the fringe of trade routes linking the Islamic civilisation to the north with the rapidly Westernising society of the coast. Bohannan argues that the Tiv pre-colonial economy was organised through three 'spheres of exchange', arranged in a hierarchy; and like could normally only be exchanged with like within each sphere. At the bottom were subsistence items like foodstuffs and household goods traded in small amounts at local markets. Then came a limited range of prestige goods linked to long-distance trade and largely controlled by Tiv elders. These included cloth, cattle, slaves and copper bars, the last sometimes serving as a standard of value and means of exchange within its sphere. The highest category was rights in persons, above all

women, ideally sisters, exchanged in marriage between male-dominated kin groups.

The norm of exchanging only within each sphere was sometimes breached. Conversion upward was emulated and its opposite was disgraceful. The absence of general-purpose money made both difficult. Subsistence goods are high in bulk and low in value; they do not transport easily and their storage is problematic (food rots). Prestige goods are the opposite on all counts. How many peas would it take to buy a slave? Moreover, the content of the spheres had changed: sister exchange had been largely replaced by bridewealth; slavery was abolished and the supply of metal rods had dried up. Bohannan still insists that Tiv culture was traditionally maintained through this separation of compartments of value.

The introduction of modern money was a disaster, according to him. Ordinary people could sell anything in small amounts, accumulate the money, buy prestige goods and enter the marriage circuit on their own terms, regardless of the elders. This amounted to the destruction of traditional culture. It is as if the technical properties of modern money alone were sufficient to undermine a way of life. Now this argument has come under sustained criticism; for example, that it is idealist and should pay more attention to the organisation of production (Dupré and Rey 1978), and that money is just a symbol of a whole complex of economic relations we might summarise as capitalism (Bloch and Parry 1989). But even these critics tend to ignore the political dimension of the colonial transformation.

The contributors to Parry and Bloch (1989) share the view that indigenous societies around the world take modern money in their stride, turning it to their own social purposes rather than being subject to its impersonal logic. The underlying theory is familiar from Emile Durkheim (1965 [1912]). There are two circuits of social life: one, the everyday, is short term, individuated and materialistic; the other, the social, is long term, collective and idealised, even spiritual. Market transactions fall into the first category and all societies seek to subordinate them to the conditions of their own reproduction, which is the realm of the second category. For some reason, which they do not investigate, money has acquired in Western economies a social force all of its own, whereas the rest of the world retains the ability to keep it in its place.

So here too we have a hierarchy of value where modern money comes second to the institutions that secure society's continuity. The picture becomes clearer if we apply the spheres of exchange concept to Western societies. As Alfred Marshall (1979 [1890]) wrote, it is not uncommon for modern consumers to rank commodities according to a scale of cultural value. Other things being equal, we would prefer not to have to sell expensive consumer durables in order to pay the grocery bills. And we would like to acquire the symbols of elite status, such as a first-rate education. If you asked British

people how many toilet rolls a BMW is worth or how many oranges buy an Eton education, they would think you were crazy. Yet all these things have been bought with money for longer than we can remember. So the universal exchangeability introduced by modern money is compatible with cultural values denying that all goods are commensurate. Nor is this just a matter of ideas; there are real social barriers involved. It does not matter how many oranges a street trader sells, he will not get his son accepted for Eton. And the gatekeepers of the ancient universities insist that access to what they portray as an aristocracy of intelligence cannot be bought.

This gives us a clue to the logic of spheres of exchange. The aristocracy everywhere claims that you cannot buy class. Money and secular power are supposed to be subordinate to inherited position and spiritual leadership. In practice, we know that money and power have long gained entry into ruling elites. Alexis de Tocqueville (1955 [1856]) praised the flexibility of the English aristocracy, unlike the French, for readily admitting successful merchants and soldiers to their ranks. One class above all others still resists this knowledge, the academic intellectuals. And so we line up with Tiv elders in bemoaning the corrosive power of modern money and vainly insist that traditional culture should prevail.

Why money matters

Westerners appear to think that including money in a transaction makes a huge difference to its social significance. It is not so in most of the world's societies. I was once talking to a Ghanaian student about exchanges between lovers in his country and he said that it was common there for a boy, after sleeping with a girl he has met at a party, to leave some money as a gift and token of esteem. Once he had done this with a visiting American student and the resulting explosion was gigantic – 'Do you imagine that I am a prostitute?' and so on. Where does that moral outrage come from? Why does money matter so much to us?

Buying and selling human beings is an old practice. We call it slavery. A wage, however, is a pledge, a promise to pay when the work is done, which is more flexible than slavery and ties up much less capital. A flood of rural–urban migrants into industrial employment established wage labour as the norm in nineteenth-century Europe (Thompson 1968). This led to an attempt to separate the spheres in which paid and unpaid work predominated. The first was ideally objective and impersonal, specialised and calculated; the second was subjective and personal, diffuse, based on long-term interdependence. Inevitably, the one was associated with the payment of money in a public place, the other with 'home'; so that 'work' usually meant outside activities, and the business of maintaining families became known as 'housework'. Now we earn money when we work and we spend it in our spare

time, which is focused on the home, so that production and consumption are linked in an endless cycle. But it is not easy. Especially at times of crisis, it is difficult to keep the personal and the impersonal apart; yet our economic culture demands nothing less of us.

One sphere is a zone of infinite scope where things, and increasingly human creativity, are bought and sold for money, *the market*. The second is a protected sphere of domestic life, where intimate personal relations hold sway, *home*. The market is unbounded and, in a sense, unknowable, whereas the bounds of domestic life are known only too well. The normal link between the two is that some adults, traditionally men more than women, go out to *work*, to 'make' the money on which the household subsists. The economy of the home rests on spending this money and performing services without payment. The result is a heightened sense of division between an outside world where our humanity feels swamped and a precarious zone of protected personality at home. This duality is the moral and practical foundation of capitalist society and prostitution exposes its contradictions. What could be more personal than sex and more impersonal than a money payment?

The attempt to construct a market where commodities are exchanged instantly and impersonally as alienable private property is utopian (Macpherson 1964). The idea of civil society in this sense was to grant a measure of independence for market agents from the arbitrary interventions of personal rulers. All the efforts of economists to insist on the autonomy of an abstract market logic cannot disguise the fact that market relations have a personal and social component, particularly when the commodity being bought and sold is human creativity. Until recently, markets and money were minor appendages to agricultural society, largely external to relations that organised the performance of work and the distribution of its product (Polanyi 1944; Weber 1981 [1927]). The middle-class revolution of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries prepared the way for markets to be accepted at the centre of society (Carrier 1994). But it was the industrial revolution that made selling one's labour for wages the main source of livelihood. Only now did the market for human services become the main means of connecting families to society.

Where does the social pressure come from to make markets impersonal? Max Weber (1981 [1927]) had one answer: rational calculation of profit in enterprises depends on the capitalist's ability to control product and factor markets, especially that for labour. But human work is not an object separable from the person performing it, so people must be taught to submit to the impersonal disciplines of the workplace. The war to impose this submission has never been completely won (see Parry chap. 9 supra). So, just as money is intrinsic to the home economy, personality remains intrinsic to the workplace, which means that the cultural effort required to keep the two spheres separate, if only at the conceptual level, is huge.

Money in capitalist societies stands for alienation, detachment, impersonal society, the outside; its origins lie beyond our control. Relations marked by the absence of money are the model of personal integration and free association, of what we take to be familiar, the inside. Commodities are 'goods' because we consume them in person, but we find it difficult to embrace money, the means of their exchange, as 'good' because it belongs to a sphere that is indifferent to morality and, in some sense, stays there. The good life, instead of uniting work and home, is restricted to what takes place in the latter.

This institutional dualism, forcing individuals to divide themselves, asks too much of us. People want to integrate division, to make some meaningful connection between themselves as subjects and society as an object. It helps that money, as well as being the means of separating public and domestic life, was always the main bridge between the two. Today money is both the principal source of our vulnerability in society and the main practical symbol allowing each of us to make an impersonal world meaningful. If Durkheim (1965 [1912]) said we worship society and call it God, then money is the God of capitalist society.

Anthropologists might sign up for the sentiment that money is the root of all evil. But, in demonising money, they come close to endowing the institution with an evil power all of its own. Karl Marx wrote in *Capital* (1970 [1867]: 71–83) about 'the fetishism of commodities and the secret thereof'. The word *fetiche* is Portuguese for a West African custom of dedicating a shrine to a spirit that is thought to inhabit a particular place. So, if you need to swim across a dangerous river, a sacrifice to the spirit of the river will help you succeed. Marx considered this to be an example of religious alienation. In his view the spirit was an invention of the human mind; but the Africans experienced their own creation as a superior agency capable of granting life or death. Something similar, he believed, was at work in our common attitudes to markets and money. Commodities are things made by people; money is the means we have created for facilitating their exchange. Yet we often experience markets as animated objects exercising a power over us that is devoid of human content, a force that is usually manifested in the money form. Prices go up and down, more often up, in a way that undermines our ability to manage our own lives. Marx thought we might overcome this alienation since, unlike the spirits produced by religious imagination, we know that human labour is the source of the commodities we exchange for money. His *Capital* was designed to show the way towards such an emancipation.

We want to believe, at least, that the money we live by has a secure objective foundation. Georg Simmel (1978 [1900]) thought of society as an endlessly-proliferating network of exchanges (in other words, a market). He rejected the British attempt to base money on the objective certainty of a gold

standard, since this reinforced a notion of money as something outside our individual or collective control. He saw it rather as a symbol of our interdependence, locating its value in the trust that comes from membership in society. Like Marx, he identified a parallel between the abstraction of money prices in commodity exchange and the abstraction of thought (scientific analysis) that represents the highest level of our cognitive interaction with the world.

For Simmel, there is no objective truth, no absolute on which we can hang our faith in existence. All we have are the subjective judgements we have made over time. Truth is relative to its application. Similarly, the value of commodities is not based on some objective standard, but is merely the outcome of what people are willing to pay in relation to all the other goods and services they want, given the resources at their disposal. Money is the means of making these complex calculations. This was roughly the position of the new marginalist economics of the day.[3] So money is the common measure of value uniting all the independent acts of exchange, stabilising the volatile world of commodity exchange, much as Durkheim thought society lent stability to the fluctuations of everyday life. Money, of course, is itself relative; but Simmel thought it represents an element of coherence in a world of constantly shifting prices. We are not yet ready to face the complex relativity of the real world, and so take comfort from money's symbolic steadiness. Most people prefer to believe that there is something out there we can rely on. If God is dead and Society has been killed off by the economists, then let Money be something real and enduring.

An anthropological analysis of money: the euro

The euro is a decisive break with the past, symbolising the birth of a new social order. Or is it? In order to make sense of its impact on European societies, I choose to focus on money as both an idea and an object; as 'heads and tails' or the interplay of states and markets; as memory, a meaningful link between persons and communities; and as a source of economic democracy, when issued by the people.

Money as idea and object

Against the myth of money's origin in barter, Keynes (1930) asserts that states invented money. He distinguishes the way debts, prices or purchasing power are *expressed* (money as a unit of account, or money of account) from what is actually *discharged* or *held* (money as a medium of exchange, or money proper). Thus, money has an insubstantial form (money of account) and a substantial form (money proper); is always both an idea and an object, virtual and real. Smith and Marx stressed money's substantial form, money proper, but Keynes thought this was less important than the emergence of a formal,

state-defined money of account. Once this existed, people began to transact business using both money proper, issued by the state, and the obligations of individuals and corporations. Presently, the bulk of these obligations are issued by banks; they far outweigh money proper in circulation, and Keynes calls them 'bank money'.

The essence of modern state money is that currency of little or no worth is offered to a people by its government in payment for real goods and services, is the sole legal means of exchange within the territory and is the required medium for payment of taxes. Central banks jealously guard the national monopoly, policing the banks who actually issue most of the money. During the last two centuries, state money has oscillated between being based on a commodity (such as gold) and being worthless ('fiat' or paper money). In practice most currencies are a hybrid. From the beginning, states and markets were symbiotic. States needed the revenues from taxation of trade and some exotic commodities as symbols of power; merchants needed the protection of law and the establishment of a public standard. Each rested on an individualised concept of society: the state on society centralised as a single agency, merchants on private property in commodities and money. Society conceived of as people belonging to specific communities and associations was excluded.

Heads or tails?

Take a look at any coin. It has two sides. One contains a symbol of political authority, most commonly the head of a ruler, hence *heads*. The other tells us what it is worth, its quantitative value in exchange for other commodities. Rather less obviously, this is called *tails*. The two sides are related to each other as top to bottom. One carries the virtual authority of the state; it is a token of society, the money of account. The other says that money proper is itself a commodity, lending precision to trade; it is a real thing (this section draws on Hart 1986).

There is an obvious tension between the two sides that goes far deeper than appearances may suggest. Victorian civilisation based its market economy on money as a commodity, gold (Polanyi 1944); in the twentieth-century political management of money became normal for a time, but then became anathema again. Now there is talk again of 'the markets' reigning supreme and of states losing control over national currencies in a process of globalisation. Yet the evidence of our coinage is that both states and markets are (or *were*) indispensable to money. What states and markets share is a commitment to founding the economy on impersonal money. If you drop the coin, the person who picks it up can do exactly the same as you with it. Impersonal money, maintaining its value as a commodity across borders, made long-distance trade possible between people who did not know each other. Today this

impersonality of money proper is what recommends it to people who prefer their transactions to be secret.

Keynes tried to explain that modern money must be the managed outcome of the interplay between states and markets. But what if money came from the people instead? Some have said that it does. The German romantic, Adam Müller (1931 [1816]), argued that money expressed the accumulated customs of a nation or people (*Volk*); others, such as Walter Bagehot (1999 [1873]) and Simmel (1978 [1900]), conceived of money as an expression of trust within civil society, locating value in personal management of credit and debt. In an age of electronic money, other possibilities present themselves (Hart 2001), for money is principally a way of keeping track of what people do with one another. It is above all information, a measure of transactions. Money need not be left to the death struggle of the disembodied twins, states and markets. In short, money might become more meaningful than it has been of late.

The meaning of money

The word 'money' comes from Juno Moneta, whose temple in Rome was where coins were *minted*, and most European languages retain 'money' for coinage. Moneta was the goddess of memory and mother of the Muses. Her name was derived from the Latin verb *moneo*, whose first meaning is 'to remind, bring to one's recollection'. For the Romans, money, like the arts, was an instrument of collective memory that needed divine protection. As such, it was both a memento of the past and a sign of the future.

A lot more circulates by means of money than the goods and services it buys. Money conveys meanings and these tell us a lot about the way human beings make communities (Buchan 1997). It expresses both individual desires and the way we belong to each other. We need to understand better how we build the infrastructures of collective existence. How do meanings come to be shared and memory to transcend the minutiae of personal experience? Memory played an important part in John Locke's philosophy of money (Caffentzis 1989). Persons, by performing labour on the things given to us by nature in common, made them their own. But to sustain a claim on this property, they have to remain the same. Property must endure in order to be property and that depends on memory. So, money enables individuals to stabilise their personal identity by holding something durable that embodies the desires and wealth of all members of society. I would go further. Communities exist by virtue of their members' ability to exchange meanings that are substantially shared between them. People form communities to the extent that they understand one another for practical purposes. And that is why communities operate through culture (meanings held in common). Money is, with language, the most important vehicle for this collective sharing.

Communities operate through implicit rules (customs) rather than state-made laws. If they regulate their members, they usually do so informally, relying on the sanction of exclusion rather than punishment. In the nineteenth century, few believed that the state, an archaic institution of agrarian civilisation, could govern the restless energies of urban commercial society. Accordingly, 'primitive' communities were studied to throw light on the task of building modern societies according to democratic principles. Since the First World War, the state has often seemed inevitable and small-scale alternatives hardly relevant. However, nowadays the networks of market economy, amplified by the internet and fast transport, offer more direct access to the world at large than centralised states, and cheap information allows relations at a distance to be made more personal. There is a call for devolution to less rigidly organised 'communities' or regions. It is time to think again about how societies might be organised for their own development.

The meaning of money is that each of us makes it, separately and together. It is a symbol of our individual relationship to the community. This relationship may be conceived of, much as the state would have it, as a durable ground on which to stand, anchoring identity in a collective memory whose concrete symbol is money. Or it may be viewed as a more creative process where we each generate the personal credit linking us to society in the form of multiple communities. This requires us to accept that society rests on nothing more solid than the transient exchanges we participate in. And that is a step few people are prepared to take at present.

People's money

Future generations may well conclude that we are passing through a cumulative tax revolt of proportions not seen since the end of the Roman empire (Weber 1974 [1909]). Revenue collection, both by government and corporations, depends on the ability to force people to pay through the threat of punishment; and territorial monopoly is indispensable to both. This, for all their conflicts of interest, underlies the continuing alliance between corporations and governments. The issue is whether borderless trade at the speed of light will permit governments and corporations still to compel payment of their dues.

States are too big for the small things and too small for the big things. Central powers will be devolved to regional or local government bodies, since people are more likely to fund public projects nearer to home. At the same time, they will seek out more inclusive institutions (federations, international networks and single-issue pressure groups) better suited to addressing global problems. The territorial dimension of society will therefore devolve to more local units. These will retain a modified ability to coerce revenues from their members, at a level limited by the sanction of personal mobility. Support for

projects beyond the local level will be voluntary because of the scope for evading unwanted taxes.

How might public economies be organised without effective means of coercing payment? Some Swiss cantons have recently released their stock exchanges from state supervision, because they could not make good a threat to punish offenders. They have encouraged exchanges to draw up their own rules with the principal sanction of excluding transgressors. This example is likely to become much more widespread with the erosion of territorial power. People will then have to turn to their own forms of association and to more informal means of regulation. We could participate in many forms of money and in the circuits of exchange corresponding to them (Greco 2001).[4]

Modern bureaucracy, as embodied in law, markets and science, has undermined the meaningful attachment of persons to the social order of which they are a part. It follows that, when bureaucracy fails, the means of personal connection will have to be reinvented. There are many antecedents for building communities on the basis of individual members' moral and religious commitment. The growth of non-governmental organisations financed by charitable donations supports such an idea. Mauss (1990 [1925]) was far-sighted when he sought to trace the foundations of the modern economy back to its origin in the gift, rather than barter. This is consistent with the idea of money as personal credit, linked less to the history of state coinage than to the acknowledgement of private debt. The need to keep track of proliferating connections with others is then mediated by money as a means of collective memory.

People will voluntarily enter circuits of exchange based on special currencies. At the other extreme, we shall be able to participate as individuals in global markets, using international moneys such as the euro, electronic payment systems or even direct barter via the internet. It will be a world whose plurality of association, even fragmentation, will resemble feudalism more than the Roman empire. In such a world, one currency cannot possibly meet all the needs of a diversified region's inhabitants. The changing technical form of money has exposed the limitations of central banks, reduced now to maintaining a national monopoly whose economic inadequacy is exposed on all sides. In response, people have started generating their own money, offering individuals a variety of community currencies linked by increasingly-sophisticated electronic payment systems.

The euro

The evolution of money proper is towards ever-more insubstantial versions, from precious metals to paper notes to ledger entries to electronic digits. Money is revealed as pure information; and its function as money of account takes precedence over its form as circulating objects or currency. The euro

began life in a wholly virtual form, as money of account, without an objective existence as currency. During this time, it lost over 20 per cent of its value against the dollar. This gave the arrival of the notes and coins, in January 2002, a tangible objectivity in a world of runaway intangibles, a symbol of a new political era. But since the participating currencies had been joined in the European Monetary Union for a decade, the euro has made little difference to people's experience of money either as an idea or as an object.

Has the euro altered the balance between states and markets? The euro may not be a national currency, but it does aim to be federal, like the US dollar, and the twelve participating countries represent a league of states. Joining a larger currency bloc is a way of trying to cope with 'the markets', the global tide of virtual money that threatens to swamp the independence of national economies. But the euro is still a form of state money, and one even less democratically accountable than its national precursors. It is a throwback to the Bretton Woods era of fixed exchange rates. If government of modern societies from a fixed central point has always been anomalous, this is even more likely to be true of Europe in the near future. Its constituent states will come under pressure for more flexible instruments of economic management. The euro cannot do the job all by itself.

If money is memory, then the euro provokes very long memories indeed. Its advent was celebrated by commentators as a return to a cohesion not seen since the Roman empire. Whatever we may think of Rome's political system, the promise of overcoming the fragmentation of European sovereignty inherited from feudalism is indeed the huge symbolic prize conferred by monetary union. The European Union is a community, not a state; and its founding principle of subsidiarity ensures that there is room for many levels of community underneath. European unity is valuable; but there is room for less-inclusive monetary instruments to complement the euro, just as French or Parisian identity is hardly erased by a cross-border currency.

Money of account is the key to its social significance and, after several thousand years of state money linked to scarce commodities, it will take some effort to embrace another form, people's money. Digitalisation encourages a growing separation between society and landed power, but the euro involves only a limited break with the territorial principle. Its logic is still that of a central bank monopoly within an expanded territory. At best, the national governments will be more constrained in their ability to raise taxes beyond the regional norm. And, of course, travellers will be less subject than before to usurious exchange costs. Against this, management of the European economy from a single point will impose stresses on regions ill-suited to the common monetary policy. And people will still finance governments and the banks through the imposition of a monopoly currency as sole legal tender. We can make our own money, rather than pay for the privilege of receiving it from our

rulers. Already community currencies are breaking new ground, thanks to the possibilities inherent in the new information technologies. The next chapter of monetary history will be written by such approaches. But the euro will probably be with us for as long as Europeans think of themselves as a community with common purposes.

Notes

1. Akin and Robbins (1999) present a rich collection of ethnographic essays on money in Melanesia, but there is no attempt to engage with economic theory.
2. See my website, www.thememorybank.co.uk, for a version of the text.
3. The marginalist revolution is attributed to Stanley Jevons (England), Carl Menger (Austria) and Léon Walras (Switzerland) in the 1870s, but Alfred Marshall (1979 [1890]) was the main instrument of its diffusion.
4. I have benefited greatly from the knowledge of Michael Linton, who invented the most widespread type of community currency, known as LETS, in British Columbia in 1982 (see www.openmoney.org).

References

Akin, D. and J. Robbins (eds) 1999. *Money and modernity: state and local currencies in Melanesia*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Bagehot, W. 1999 (1873). *Lombard Street: a description of the money market*. New York: Wiley.

Bloch, M. and J. Parry 1989. Introduction: money and the morality of exchange. In *Money and the morality of exchange* (eds) J. Parry and M. Bloch. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bohannan, P. 1955. Some principles of exchange and investment among the Tiv of central Nigeria. *American Anthropologist* 57: 60–70.

Bohannan, P. 1959. The impact of money on an African subsistence economy. *Journal of Economic History* 19: 491–503.

Buchan, J. 1997. *Frozen desire: an inquiry into the meaning of money*. London: Picador.

Caffentzis, G. 1989. *Clipped coins, abused words and civil government in John Locke's philosophy of money*. New York: Autonomedia.

Carrier, J. 1994. *Gifts and commodities: exchange and Western capitalism since 1700*. London: Routledge.

Carrier, J. (ed.) 1997. *Meanings of the market.* Oxford: Berg.

Cook, S. 1966. The obsolete 'anti-market' mentality: a critique of the substantive approach to economic anthropology. *American Anthropologist* 68: 323–45.

de Tocqueville, A. 1955 (1856). *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*. New York: Doubleday.

Dunbar, R. 2000. *Inventing money: long-term capital management and the search for risk-free profits*. New York: Wiley.

Dupré, G. and P.-P. Rey 1978. Reflections on the relevance of a theory of the history of exchange. In *Relations of production: Marxist approaches to economic anthropology* (ed.) D. Seddon. London: Frank Cass.

Durkheim, E. 1965 (1912). *The elementary forms of the religious life*. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press.

Greco, T. 2001. *Money: understanding and creating alternatives to legal tender*. South Burlington, Vt.: Chelsea Green.

Gregory, C. 1982. *Gifts and commodities.* London: Academic Press.

Gregory, C. 1997. *Savage money: the anthropology and politics of commodity exchange*. Amsterdam: Harwood Academic.

Gudeman, S. 1986. *Economics as culture.* London: Routledge.

Gudeman, S. 2001. *The anthropology of economy.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Gudeman, S. and A. Rivera 1990. *Conversations in Colombia.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Hart, K. 1986. Heads or tails? Two sides of the coin. *Man* 21: 637–56.

Hart, K. 1987. Barter. In *New Palgrave dictionary of economic theory and doctrine* (eds) J. Eatwell, M. Milgate and P. Newman. London: Macmillan.
Hart, K. 2001. *Money in an unequal world.* New York: Texere. (First published as: 2000. *The memory bank*. London: Profile Books.)
Hicks, J. 1969. *A theory of economic history*. London: Oxford University Press.
Keynes, J.M. 1930. *A treatise on money.* London: Macmillan.
Keynes, J.M. 1936. *The general theory of employment, interest and money*. London: Macmillan.
Macpherson, C.B. 1964. *The political theory of possessive individualism.* Oxford: Clarendon.
Malinowski, B. 1921. The primitive economics of the Trobriand Islanders. *Economic Journal* 31: 1–16.
Marshall, A. 1979 (1890). *Principles of economics.* London: Macmillan.
Marx, K. 1970 (1867). *Capital: a critique of political economy*, vol. 1. London: Lawrence & Wishart.
Mauss, M. 1990 (1925). *The gift.* London: Routledge.
Müller, A. 1931 (1816). *Elemente der Staatskunst: Theorie des Geldes*. Leipzig: A.Kröne.
Parry, J. and M. Bloch (eds) 1989. *Money and the morality of exchange.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Polanyi, K. 1944. *The great transformation.* Boston, Mass.: Beacon Books.
Simmel, G. 1978 (1900). *The philosophy of money.* London: Routledge.
Smith, A. 1961 (1776). *An inquiry into the nature and causes of the wealth of nations*. London: Methuen.
Thompson, E.P. 1968. *The making of the English working class.* Harmondsworth: Penguin.
Veblen, T. 1957 (1918). *The higher learning in America.* New York: Sagamore.
Weatherford, J. 1997. *The history of money*. New York: Three Rivers Press.
Weber, M. 1974 (1909). The social causes of the decline of ancient civilization. In *The agrarian sociology of ancient civilizations*, M. Weber. London: New Left Books.
Weber, M. 1981 (1927). *General economic history.* New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books.

11 Finance

Bill Maurer

Anthropological interest in finance has been growing since the 1980s, when speculative stock markets and the financialisation of the world economy occupied headlines and imaginations. Finance also took on new urgency because of the debt crises, currency devaluations and financial collapses that beset many traditional sites of anthropological fieldwork. While anthropologists were accustomed to documenting the effects of the global financial architecture, from institutions like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank to multinational corporations and extractive industries, finance itself – its mechanics, the entities that make it up, even its very definition – remained somewhat obscure. Few anthropologists had the training or inclination to get into the nuts and bolts of finance, and fewer still had any clear understanding of the field apart from their own personal experience with credit cards, mortgages and retirement accounts. When Arjun Appadurai issued the call to study 'financescapes', those 'complex fiscal and investment flows' of the 'global grid of currency speculation and capital transfer' (1990: 8) that have seemingly transformed older demarcations of region and place, few heeded it.

That is beginning to change. The work surveyed in this chapter represents what may constitute a nascent subfield, the anthropology of finance. Drawing inspiration from work in other fields with a longer history of research on the topic, anthropologists are bringing the hallmark method of participant-observation and the theoretical tools of the discipline to bear on such diverse financial phenomena as stock markets, derivative contracts, mortgages and other debt instruments, the mathematical and legal apparatus of finance, and trading floors. While this work sometimes harks back to earlier research in economic anthropology and especially the anthropology of money (see Hart chap. 10 supra), much of it strikes out on its own. To some anthropologists, the new objects of finance themselves resist conventional anthropological modes of understanding things 'from the native's point of view' (Geertz 1973), not least because those objects create their own contexts: things financial actively produce the social, cultural and material milieu in which they have currency and make sense, without always being mediated by human actors. Or, to put it another way, a mathematical formula cannot be interviewed; its makers and users can, but the results it produces can have effects unintended by and outside the control of those human agents.

Accordingly, anthropologists of finance have turned to social studies of science that emphasise the interaction and mutual constitution of human and non-human actors.

The present account is necessarily partial, and it is written at a time just prior to the expected publication of a number of anthropological monographs that deal specifically with finance. It will not review the debates in the social sciences about the beginnings of 'global finance' and its relationship to state sovereignty. Signposts for picking one's way through that history include the stock market crash of 1929, which signalled an end to the nineteenth-century financial system, the Bretton Woods agreements, which established the mid-twentieth-century international financial architecture, and the demise of Bretton Woods in the 1970s, when the US dollar was untethered from gold, and the securitisation of international debts bolstered the power of investment houses over banks and other financial institutions. Legal changes in the 1980s quickened the field of finance, as did the increasing power of neoliberal ideologies that promoted 'free' markets and sought to privatise many state functions (including financing of public works and social services). In 1986, the London stock exchange became open to foreign traders and investment companies; additionally, the positions of broker and dealer were allowed to be folded into one and to negotiate their commissions. This so-called 'Big Bang' radically reshaped the character of stock trading in the City by breaking the hold of entrenched banking institutions (and, it should be noted, aristocratic elites who had previously dominated trading) and creating a global financial market operating in real time (Helleiner 1994; Leyshon and Thrift 1997). New information technologies went hand in glove with these financial changes, becoming both their method and object. Liberalised regulations permitting one-stop financial shopping, with investing, consumer banking and insurance all allowed to operate under one roof, also increased the pace, scale, scope and, arguably, risk of finance.

This chapter will leave to one side work in the anthropology of money that speaks to many of the same issues as would an anthropology of finance.[1] Because of the newness of anthropological engagement with finance, it is difficult to draw the kind of clear boundaries around it that one could expect for other sub-fields of the discipline. In addition, anthropologists working on financial topics are in dialogue with scholars in a wide variety of other fields, including sociology, geography, political science, economics, history, literature and science studies. Their interlocutors in those other fields sometimes draw on the same sources of theoretical or methodological inspiration as they do. Of particular note is the emphasis in sociological studies of finance on the ethnographic method. Of the two full-length ethnographic monographs of financial markets currently in print, Mitchell Abolafia's (1996) *Making markets* and Ellen Hertz's (1998) *The trading*

crowd, one is by a sociologist (Abolafia). In short, interdisciplinary conversations characterise the anthropology of finance. Although it is difficult to specify a uniquely anthropological contribution to these conversations, I make the effort below.

Definitions, biases and colonial legacies

The broadest definition of finance would include all aspects of the management of money or other assets, and, in particular, the management of debt and equity as a means of raising capital: making money with money. The ethnographic record is full of examples of debt and equity schemes that stand apart from the modern institutions of banking and finance, such as rotating credit and savings associations, indigenous forms of insurance, debt peonage, pawning and so forth. It also contains rich data on the interpretation of artefacts like interest-bearing capital in various cosmological systems. Michael Taussig's famous ethnography of South American peasants and proletarians (which follows Nash 1972) documented how interest had come to be understood in terms of contractual arrangements with the devil: only the devil can contravene the natural order and make inert matter reproduce. Taussig also recorded the practice of surreptitiously causing a banknote to be blessed with holy water during the baptism of a child, in the belief that a baptised bill will return with interest to its owner (and simultaneously sap the wealth of those with whom he deals) (Taussig 1980: 126). Taussig explained such practices in terms of an indigenous critical discourse on capitalism, an echo of Aristotle's condemnation of interest and praise of money's use in facilitating trade, and a commentary on the social relationships behind economic transactions. Even though a supernatural force makes money fecund, the fact that that power has to be invoked by a human being – the baptiser of the bill, the other party to the devil's contract – shows that the peasants were not mystified by the fetishism of commodities but rather by the 'precapitalist fetishism' that views relationships among humans, not relationships among things, as primary (1980: 129–30).

Anthropologists and historians have also had to deal with the entrenched bias, mainly from the realms of policy and development but also the discipline of economics, that so-called primitive peoples simply did not have financial institutions or credit and debt systems prior to European contact and conquest. Thus, modernisation theorists in the mid-twentieth century sought to counter 'informal' (and, by implication, untrustworthy or unstable) quasi-financial institutions with the 'formal' mechanisms of modern banking and lending. In the late twentieth century, with the ideological dominance of entrepreneurial models of development, development planners often presumed that in attempting to provide people with access to credit they had to begin from whole cloth and introduce a wholly novel set of procedures

and beliefs. Some prominent writers have even suggested that under-development stems directly from a lack of the legal architecture of securitisation, or the abstracting of partible shares from material goods and property in order to turn property into capital (de Soto 2000). While finance played a role in the colonial project through the formation of cooperative societies and rural banks (for example, Furnivall 1939: 357) and the securitisation of property in land through cadastral surveys and titling schemes (Guha 1981; Maurer 1997; Mitchell 2002), and while the denial of access to finance also served to limit the economic and political power of colonised peoples, colonised peoples in many cases possessed their own forms of currency, credit, debt, insurance and so on. Historians, especially of Africa and often in collaboration with anthropologists, have documented these kinds of financial institutions and their interactions with those of the colonisers in ways that paint a more complex picture than the straightforward supplanting of one system by another. Imposed systems were rarely any more stable than those they sought to replace, and local systems were often quite durable and capable of sustaining long-distance and long-lasting financial relationships (see the contributions to Guyer 1995 and Stiansen and Guyer 1999).

Because European systems of finance, debt and credit went along with colonial governance and missionisation, they were often interpreted in terms of political authority (via, for example, the tax and tariff regimes of the bureaucratic state) and morality, ethics and religion (via, for example, the Abrahamic religions' emphasis on divine judgement as an accounts-settling, or the prohibition of interest in Islam and debates over usury or 'excessive' interest in both Christianity and Judaism). In both the political and religious domains, colonial and post-colonial efforts to 'teach' finance as a means of (self-) development often rested on assumptions about time: teaching finance meant teaching self-restraint and the time-horizon of long-term investment, the amortisation of debts and the future benefit of savings (Stiansen and Guyer 1999: 10). In the nineteenth century, people accustomed to systems of obligation to chiefly nobles found themselves hard pressed to understand why the repayment of monetary debts would be in their best interest: wealth in people and wealth and cash were hard to reconcile, leading colonial merchants and traders to complain that 'you have to give credit to the Blacks here and they pay late or never' or 'The greatest caution is requisite in giving credit to the natives … [because] once [you] allow them to exceed a certain sum … they cease to pay anything further' (quoted in Law 1999: 19). It is a small step from this colonial raciology of debt to twentieth-century development discourse and its depictions of people as poor because they cannot manage money, do not possess an entrepreneurial spirit, or are incapable of the abstract thought that finance seemingly requires (see Blim chap. 19 infra). Hence, the

World Bank reports that unsophisticated lenders in some 'transitioning' or 'developing' economies are reluctant to accept certain kinds of collateral from potential borrowers, specifically movable property held by the prospective borrower such as factory machinery or inventories. 'Rather', the Bank writes, 'lenders require that the moveable property be placed under their direct control – as if they were valuables in a bank vault or goods in a bonded warehouse' (World Bank 1996: 89). The Bank then asks, incredulously, 'Why is real estate or merchandise in a vault acceptable as collateral, but not livestock, machinery, and inventories?' (1996: 89). The Bank thus proposes the development of legal regimes that permit the 'creation of security interests for any person over any thing' (1996: 89; on the cultural logic of securitisation, see Maurer 1999).

Maurice Bloch and Jonathan Parry's (1989) refocusing of anthropological discussions of money away from its meanings and toward its role in mediating short-term individual decisions and long-term socio-cosmological reproduction provides a useful rubric for situating recent anthropological work on finance. The mediation of short-term individual interest and long-term reproduction can be seen as both an analytic device and an ethnographic observation of the way many peoples of the circum-Mediterranean, broadly defined, have constructed and then worried about finance. The prohibition of gain without risk in Islam and of usury in medieval Christianity both have to do with concerns that those who make money with money sacrifice the long term to their own short-term desires, and manipulate time by converting it into money. The Abrahamic texts, of course, are replete with accounting and financial metaphors. The irony for the apocalyptic religions is that while the final reckoning is prophesied it is also always an endlessly receding horizon. So, too, with finance. The promise of a long-term settlement of accounts is what animates the lending of money – you do not lend unless you are guaranteed a return in the future – and yet a final settling of accounts, were it to arrive, would render living and reproductive capital dead again, and present no future possibilities for monetary gain. Hence, the long term is both the precondition for and the animating fiction of Western finance. Western economists before the econometric revolution recognised this, most famously John Maynard Keynes, who rejected long-term economic planning with his quip that, 'In the long run, we are all dead' (Keynes 1923: 65). Joan Robinson, too, in criticising the theory that prices tend towards the equilibrium of supply and demand, noted that the idea of equilibrium depended on a spatial metaphor to explain a temporal process and denied any real role to time (Robinson 1960). Keynes and Robinson both provided criticisms of equilibrium theory, itself a core component of the efficient markets hypothesis upon which contemporary financial architecture rests and which some new scholarship in anthropology revisits.

Finance and fiction: appearances can be deceiving

Much anthropological reflection on finance has tended to examine the metaphysics of financial temporality rather than delve into its infrastructure. Drawing on Karl Marx's classic account of 'fictitious capital' in *Capital*, volume 3, which contrasts the fiction of credit with the 'real' capital of fixed assets (the 'produced means of production', de Brunhoff 1992: 22) and 'money-capital' paid directly in wages and for goods, anthropologists have lingered over the 'fictions' of contemporary finance. Anthropologists informed by the geographer David Harvey's (1989) *The condition of postmodernity*, attend to the cultural formations co-occurring with finance capital and find artifice, illusion, mystification and the occult. When ethnographers and their subjects alike discover the 'there's nothing there' of contemporary finance, the ethnographers often turn to denunciatory forms of Marxism, reasserting the 'real' material ground of production against credit. The subjects often turn to discourses of magic, enchantment and the occult (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999). In this, both echo seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europeans who explored the metaphorical and metaphysical associations binding credit with faith, fiction, gender and literary genre.

The literary historian Catherine Ingrassia (1998), for instance, has demonstrated how finance and the literary genre of fiction served as analogues for one another in eighteenth-century England. The South Sea Bubble scandal led to depictions of stock-jobbers as feminine, willing to believe any (false) story, at a time when women were becoming avid consumers of story books as well as participants in fantastic investment schemes. Anna Tsing revisits the South Sea Bubble in the context of a similarly fantastic investment scheme involving a non-existent gold mine in Indonesia in order to argue that when 'investors are looking for the *appearance* of success', 'economic performance is conjured dramatically' (Tsing 2000: 141–2; original emphasis). The conjuring act depends on a spatial and scalar imagination, the delimiting of 'global' and 'local' contingently and haltingly, and continually made and re-made, exactly as a 'dramatic performance' on a stage (2000: 118).

Finance and neoliberal development

Recent anthropological work on finance has been less content to linger over its fictions and more interested in its objects, both in the sense of its ends and its technique and apparatus. Anthropologists writing ethnographies of neoliberal states often discuss the financialisation of the state and the efforts of multilateral institutions like the World Bank to produce 'investable' jurisdictions. Legal guarantees of property and security interests in land and other immovables are often central to such efforts. Anthropologists and other social scientists who have studied the 'offshore' financial centres on

Caribbean, Pacific and Channel islands have studied these legal transformations and their concomitant effects. Most discuss notions of nationality and sovereignty (for example, Amit 2001; Donaghy 2002; Hampton and Christensen 1999; Hudson 1998; Maingot 1995; Maurer 1997; Palan 1998; Rawlings 2002; Roberts 1994), focusing especially on the 'differentiated levels of intensity by which states … apply their regulation' (Palan 1998: 625) and the imagination of space and territory that those levels of intensity promote. That is, these authors view the very definition of some places as 'offshore' to others as a political process and explore the cultural demarcation of region compelled by the regulation of the international state system. They also document the intertwining of the social construction of place and trust, since attracting international finance depends on hiding from view money laundering or other illicit activities that can occur offshore, and drawing a clear line between the often structurally identical practices of sound asset protection and tax evasion. Amit (2001) and Maurer (1997) discuss the impact of offshore finance on citizenship and belonging in the Caribbean, noting that financial flows have generated economic mobility for citizens while bolstering rigid distinctions between citizens and non-citizen immigrants. Marshall shows how Caribbean offshore finance can be understood in terms of the conflict between different sectors of elites, the dominance since the 1980s of the islands' merchant class and the 'hegemony of circulation over production' that has characterised the Caribbean since its plantation and slavery days (Marshall 1996: 209).

Other ethnographic studies of neoliberalism discuss the cultural work necessary to produce and stabilise the economic domain as separate from the political, in order then to subordinate the latter to the former (for example, Williamson 2002). Some attend to the role of 'culture' in neoliberal development strategies. Julia Elyachar (2002) shows how multilateral institutions' sponsorship of microlending projects in Egypt leads into discourses of the national debt and leads people to new understandings of the benefits of being caught up in creditor–debtor relationships with richer others, though not in a manner those powerful others may have intended. She shows how development agencies' discourse of empowerment through debt is based on harnessing people's already-existing 'microinformality', their on-the-ground, 'real life' practices and social networks. Objectifying microinformality and turning it into a resource is a response to older development discourses that viewed local cultures as hindrances. A key assumption is that credit is a human right, a premise fostered by institutions like the World Bank once they realised that their efforts to discipline Third-World states through structural adjustment programmes that rolled back state financing for social services were having a detrimental effect on the poor. Elyachar shows how the new emphasis on microinformality was devised by

international organisations to solve the safety-net problem without restoring power to the state. Of course, it leads to new forms of discipline as well, since borrowers can be imprisoned for failure to repay. Since such imprisonment derives from the laws of contract, it represents a new form of governance through self-discipline, rather than the heavy hand of the state. This discipline demands a reflexivity about anthropological concepts: when the cultural practices of poor people are transformed by development planners into 'social capital', then anthropological concepts of culture themselves can no longer be taken for granted as (mere) analytical tools (Elyachar 2002: 511). Anthropology, Elyachar (2002: 499) notes, 'played more than a midwife's role' in the birth of the very idea of informality. Culture here becomes a 'new type of discipline that circumvents the state by way of finance and NGOs' (2002: 511).

In a related vein, Erica Bornstein's *The spirit of development* (2003), which may be the first ethnographic monograph on faith-based non-governmental organisations, documents the role of ideas about charity in the massive and understudied financial flows of child sponsorship programmes and religious aid. She is particularly attentive to the manner in which development discourse, which appears secular, is shot through with Christian and millennial assumptions, and sketches the interface between Christian missionisation and the mission of economic development. Her ethnography stands as a singular example of the documentation of a financescape perhaps not anticipated by Appadurai but of growing importance.

Sociology and anthropology of financial markets

Anthropologists and sociologists have produced pioneering ethnographies of financial markets, often involving participant-observation on the trading floor as well as in corporate offices. It is interesting, however, that despite the common methodologies, disciplinary concerns have inflected the character of these studies. So, where Abolafia (1996) discovers the importance of social networks and the role of the tension between self-interest and self-restraint in the maintenance of such networks, Ellen Hertz (1998) discovers the importance of a dialectic between two 'behavioral/ideational systems' (after Gates 1996: 7). For Abolafia, the task is to understand individual action in webs of social relationships, for the most part abstracted from any structuring system besides the playing-out of individual interests. The social construction of markets is a specifically *social* construction, worked out in the give and take of everyday human interaction. The surprise in Abolafia's ethnography is that despite the rhetoric of the free market and competition, traders at the heart of contemporary capitalism find themselves suspended in webs of relationships that exercise control and restraint over the most aggressive players even as it allows them to 'win' (for example, Abolafia 1996: 79).

Hertz, while providing the same kind of nuanced data on social networks of traders, particularly the opposition between 'big players' and 'dispersed players', lends more emphasis to the webs of significance than to sociality and to the durable, longer-term cultural–historical and political–economic structures in which traders find themselves. For Hertz, the 'stock fever' that gripped Shanghai in 1992 can be explained in terms of a tension between a centrifugal petty commodity mode of production and a centripetal tributary mode of production that, she argues, has characterised much of Chinese cultural history. The state, acting like a tributary overlord, sought literally to capitalise on its citizens' savings, an in-gathering of wealth to fuel China's transitioning economy. Citizens' own petty commodity activity and its associated ethos burgeoned into a mass movement, a 'fever', in opposition to the state but, at the same time, ultimately fulfilling the state's interests, although not without its dangers for the state. The contest is a political one between the power of the masses and the power of the state. Hence, the 'interpretative framework through which Shanghainese read their stock market is firstly political, and secondly, if at all, "economic"' (Hertz 1998: 23).

Similar contrasts of emphasis can be found in other ethnographies of stock markets. Sociologists Karin Knorr Cetina and Urs Bruegger (2000, 2002; see also Baker 1984) outline the 'global microstructures' that characterise trading markets, specifically currency markets. These are structures that are generalised 'globally' and with global impacts, but are microsocial interactional processes at the level of traders' intersubjective action and understanding. Paying close attention to the communicative practices of traders – their telegraphic, tightly parsed electronic text messages to one another, as well as their informal conversations while trading and on the telephone – these sociologists stress the analytical 'structural equivalence' of the 'interaction order' and 'macrosocial phenomena' (Knorr Cetina and Bruegger 2002: 907, after Goffman 1983). In other words, they deny the macrosocial any determining power over the micro, and instead look at the mutual constitution of these two orders. They subtly rework and critique the 'embeddedness' rubric proposed by economic sociologists like Mark Granovetter (1985), which has analogues in economic anthropology influenced by Karl Polanyi (1957; see Isaac chap. 1 supra).

There are echoes here of the formalist–substantivist debate in that sub-field: the more interaction-focused sociologists tend to sound like formalists who believe individuals act to maximise satisfactions, while those proposing attention to the embeddedness of action in wider social forms or structures tend to sound like substantivists. The difficulty for Knorr Cetina and Bruegger, however, is that the embeddedness framework tends to presuppose that actions are embedded in a distance-near setting ('the local'), while the

traders they studied instead seemed embedded in something a little more distant and dispersed, and based on back-and-forth calls and responses rather than deep interaction. They term this context 'response presence' as contrasted to 'embodied presence' (2002: 909). It becomes important, too, for their realisation that at least some of the entities with whom traders are engaged in response-presence relationships are not human or necessarily humanly directed, and that these 'common objects' around which humans structure their activity themselves deserve their own sociology. In their paper on traders' conceptions of the market (2000), they term these 'postsocial' relations, and argue that an understanding of post-social relations demands attention to the objects with whom humans have more lasting and perhaps even fulfilling relationships than they do with other humans. 'The market' for traders is an entity that they massage, move, listen to, feel and manipulate, but one that also pushes back on them, feels them, changes them and either offers or withdraws its love. These authors document the rich and often visceral vocabulary traders have for discussing their objects, and compare trading to other post-social cultural forms, like sky-diving and shopping, that challenge the centrality of human-to-human relationships. Here (but not in Knorr Cetina and Bruegger 2002!), they draw inspiration from object-relations theory and Lacanian psychoanalysis as well as more conventional sociological sources to put forward the importance of studying objects of knowledge as generating their own forms of desire.

There is something a little unsatisfying from an anthropological point of view, however, when Knorr Cetina and Bruegger discover that global microstructures often function through norms of reciprocity. In other words, the anonymous and competitive market is revealed not to be a contest of individual interests so much as a series of dyads governed by the expectation of the return gift. Discovering that markets are not so individualistic and competitive as they have been made out to be in neoclassical economic theory, or that they rely on quasi-clientage relationships, is old news to anthropology (for example, Geertz 1978). At the same time, the creative uses of ethnographic methods in trading rooms and the theoretical sophistication brought by these sociologists to core concepts in the sub-field of economic sociology have helped shape anthropological work on finance. The difference, I think, is that the anthropologists tend to work from the ethnography out to questions of cosmology, or in to questions of technique, and then query the inside–outside (or local–global) distinction itself, while the sociologists, in spite of their moves toward the post-social, still seem wedded to some conception of sociality narrowly defined as immediate human–human interaction.

Two recent anthropological studies stand out. Karen Ho's *Liquefying corporations and communities* (2003) uses ethnography among Wall Street

investment banks to understand changing conceptions of the role of finance in American society. She is interested in how what she calls 'stock market values' came to occupy a pre-eminent position in late-twentieth-century discussions over the role of 'the economy' and its relationship to social welfare. The emphasis is not on a hegemonic 'market culture' so much as contests over economic worldviews among investment elites and workers in the world of investment. She tracks the shift in notions of corporate value, from the expectation of returns in the form of dividends, to mere stock price, and concomitant shifts in political discourse around notions of 'shareholder democracy'. Where the corporation had once functioned as a total social institution, it has now been 'liquidated', turned into living capital able to flow, dissolve and reconstitute at a moment's notice. Like Hertz, Ho is interested in mass involvement in financial markets, and the impact of that mass involvement on other domains (like 'democracy'). Intriguingly, Ho also conducted fieldwork among unemployed investment bankers and looked at how people understand their own experiences of 'liquidation'.

Caitlin Zaloom (2003) conducted fieldwork in the London and Chicago financial futures markets. The two markets operate with different sets of technologies: in Chicago, traders mingle and jostle in an open-outcry pit; in London, traders work in front of computer screens trading on-line. Zaloom finds that these different technological regimes inflect traders' understandings not just of the market or their own activity, but of the most basic unit of finance itself: numbers. She characterises traders' work with numbers as 'interpretation rather than exacting calculation' (2003: 259), yet finds subtle differences between the interpretative activity of pit traders and on-line traders. While both operate with numbers as indexes of 'informational transparency' (2003: 260), the supposed key to efficient markets, in practice traders have very little information about what they are trading and very little understanding of the underlying economies or economic fundamentals that produce them. Instead, trading is an immediate, corporeal activity, where numbers become embodied dispositions more than transparent reflections of some market reality. Numbers come to 'have particular personalities', and for traders, numbers 'are themselves agents' (2003: 262). Pit traders have a visceral engagement with these numbers, signifying them with hand gestures and making them hum with pitch and tone. The pit is an arena of physicality and the voice, hand and ear its chief organs and interpretative instruments. Traders report that stopping to calculate and assess risks rationally and mathematically is actually a 'hindrance to their job', and that 'the first step' of becoming a successful trader 'is learning *not* to calculate' (2003: 264; original emphasis). For on-line traders, the screen mediates their activities and the market is rendered an apparently straightforward collection of numbers. While on-line trading technologies were designed to give traders total information, in

fact, Zaloom finds, they have actually reduced information available to traders: gone are the corporeal and sensory clues of the pit (2003: 264). Still, on-line traders generate elaborate interpretative rubrics for the numbers they see moving across their screens, imagine identities for their interlocutors and competitors, and sometimes see shadowy actors behind imagined numeric patterns. Learning to see and talk about these patterns – to engage in 'market chatter', not rational calculation – was key to the development of an interpretative community (2003: 266).

Financial instruments: from content to form

Zaloom's research tracks a theoretical and substantive innovation in the anthropology of finance that has to do with its engagement with science studies. Where both Knorr Cetina and Bruegger on the one hand and Zaloom on the other report on the gendered and sexualised images traders often use to recount their wins or losses, Zaloom spends more time than the sociologists analysing the norms of gender in finance. Compared to the sociologists' work, Ho's and Zaloom's ethnographies are marked by their attention to norms more than networks. And Zaloom's adds to the focus on norms an equally important focus on forms (after Rabinow 1995). It is not just the meanings of numbers that interest her, but their formal properties and the formats in which they are presented.

The turn towards form has occupied several anthropologists of finance, especially those who look at its apparatuses, mechanics and techniques. Not surprisingly, perhaps, this work also engages the anthropology of law and derives inspiration from science studies, since both of those fields have lent themselves to discussions of the distinction between form and content as a fact of social-object worlds rather than as just an analytical device. Anthropologists attending to financial apparatuses also draw on Michel Callon's (1998) argument that economies are 'embedded' in economic theories as much as they are in wider contexts. In other words, for Callon, economic theories 'perform' the economy rather than the economy being apprehended or represented by the theories of economics. Donald MacKenzie (2001), in science studies, explores how options-pricing formulas produce their own contexts; that is, how mathematical formulas shape trading practices in feedback loops such that the presumptions of the model became more and more true over time, even, in part, because the 'activities of those who disbelieve finance theory's efficient market hypothesis' themselves redound into the world the formula creates (MacKenzie 2001: 115; see also MacKenzie 2003; MacKenzie and Millo 2001; and in political science, see De Goede 2003 on the co-production of economic and financial knowledges). To the social-scientific literature emerging on risk and responsibility in finance (Garsten and Hasselström 2003), particularly the 'cultures of risk' associated with futures

markets (Green 2000; Pryke and Allen 2000; Tickell 2000), MacKenzie lays the groundwork for questioning how finance produces form.

Lépinay (2004) also looks at the work formulas do, not as the outcome of the interests of elites or manifestations of deeper cultural or social processes outside them, but in their own terms and as their own force. Lépinay, who has also collaborated with Hertz (in research on finance and deception), is interested in how formulas circulate and become social forms. My essay on derivative pricing models (Maurer 2002a) is concerned to unseat numbers as always signs of something else (the things counted, for example) and instead to ask how numbers maintain their power to signify. I provide a genealogy of statistics and the historical separation of mathematical from moral probability. This move is related to my work on the contorted debates over the prohibition of interest in Islamic banking and finance. There, I show how the form of arguments over interest often occupy Islamic bankers more than their content, and the forms themselves are, for participants, actual enactments of virtue in the world, even if people are trucking in something that looks and smells like interest (for example, Maurer 2002b). The structure and motion of the argument is more important than where it goes or what it uses to get there: it is not what the argument 'does', but rather its mere procession that matters. Viewing Islamic banking as casuistry in the original sense of the term, as a form of moral argument from particular cases, I also point out the similarly casuistic moral forms of 'conventional' finance.

In short, the embeddedness framework no longer seems adequate to financial worlds whose entanglements with other domains render inside and outside difficult to ascertain. This has implications, of course, for anthropological knowledge production. Marcus and Holmes (2001) discuss strategies for anthropology when its subjects – in their case, the Federal Reserve Bank of the United States – themselves produce quasi-ethnographic knowledge that both reports on and shapes the distinction between economic knowledge and 'the economy'. Annelise Riles, working with lawyers and regulators, and Hirokazu Miyazaki, working with securities traders, have been writing innovative essays on the Tokyo financial market by keeping social analysis and the knowledge-making activities of their subjects squarely in view at the same time. Just as anthropologists always feel a sense of 'temporal incongruity' with their work – we are always late, conducting salvage operations or else trying desperately to catch up to a world whose transformations outpace us – Japanese securities traders experience analogous forms of temporal incongruity from their engagement with a market operating in real time yet in a global political economy where Japan seems 'behind' the United States (Miyazaki 2003: 255). Miyazaki studies arbitrage, which exploits 'differences in the price of a single asset in two different markets' (2003: 256) and is always, by definition, a self-closing operation: if markets

are truly efficient, such differences should disappear as soon as they are noted, arbitrage itself facilitating this disappearance. Traders got caught up in tensions among different temporal imperatives, such as the (time-consuming) imperative to 'refine' trading strategies versus the imperative to instantly 'improvise'. Miyazaki also documents that the multiple and incongruous temporalities with which traders are involved also constitute their life trajectories and define the time of living as the closing-off of arbitrage possibilities in traders' personal lives.

Riles (n.d.(a), n.d.(b)) looks at legal architects of Japan's financial markets, with respect to the technical procedures of trade settlement and clearance (the process of matching buyers and sellers and settling transactions in continuous, real-time arenas). Her concern is the simultaneous intimacy and estrangement of these men and their objects, and, in particular, the manner in which an almost instantaneous or anticipatory intimacy precluded explicit articulation of knowledge claims. The lawyers spoke of the Bank of Japan, for example, as 'our mother', a caregiver who anticipates before knowledge or need could even be spoken. The shift from a net settlement system (settling accounts at the end of a trading day) to a real-time continuous settlement system represented a shift from the virtues of planning to the vagaries of risk. It also represented what Riles terms an 'unwinding' of systemic thought: the net settlement system was characterised precisely by its status as a system: a format and a set of procedures for mitigating risk. Real-time settlement, in contrast, is intended to foreclose the very possibility of system and instead to be instantly responsive and instantly to record 'the market' as it unfolds in real time. The temporality of real-time continuous settlement, Riles argues, is thus a time of pure need and instinct, like the time of the mother and her anticipatory perfection and, hence, no risk after all. 'With Real Time', Riles writes, 'analysis stopped' and 'anxious self-reflexive critique of [one's] own place in the system would now become superfluous' (n.d.(b): 11). For Riles, taking this seriously poses a real problem for a discipline used to trucking in the exotic or bizarre. Here, anthropology is presented with a milieu that considers itself to be impervious to analysis because there is nothing to analyse: there is just stimulus and automatic response. It presents itself to the anthropologist as utterly banal, flat, a landscape of uninteresting, because intimately familiar, need.

In her paper on legal theory and the over-the-counter derivatives market in Tokyo (n.d.(a)), Riles brings her work more directly to bear on the conventions of anthropological knowledge. Traditionally, anthropologists drew analogies between the knowledge practices of its subjects and its own analytical categories. For example, in the material from South America discussed at the outset of this review, Taussig analysed ideas about the devil (native knowledge) by drawing analogies with critiques of the commodity

(theoretical knowledge). Riles claims that this procedure fails when the anthropologist engages knowledge formations that coincide with those of anthropology. Japanese lawyers trying to come up with new regulations for the derivatives market make analogies between traders' practices and ideas on the one hand, and those of social science and social analysis on the other. In many ways, the work Riles might expect to perform here – ferret out the interests behind actions, look for deeper meanings beneath ideologies and then make analogies to knowledge categories in other domains – is precisely the work in which these lawyers are engaged. There is little more for her to add, as her analysis is trumped by their own. There is no distance, and no difference, and the mundane makes the epistemological quandaries to which the discipline is more accustomed beside the point.

Although a nascent field, the anthropology of finance demonstrates that there may be more to anthropological innovation than the extension of its tools to new fields (see Riles n.d.(a): 13). The very concept of innovation itself tracks rather closely the field of finance, which has consciously built itself on and propelled itself by innovation. If finance is about finding ever-new ways to make money by managing credits and debts, anthropology has been about finding ever-new ways to make knowledge by managing our intellectual debts to our subjects and our academic forebears, while extending credit into the future to the new knowledges that will (hopefully) proceed from our own. Given the puzzles explored in this review, it may be that anthropological engagement with finance will involve a kind of amortisation, a reduction to zero of those credits and debts along with the distance between the field and its subjects, subjects who sometimes invoke the same concepts and analytical apparatus as anthropologists do. The task of an anthropology of finance is to come to terms with this quandary, even as its practitioners, its subjects and much of the world may feel utterly estranged from, indeed 'liquidated' by, the financialised time-space of the contemporary moment.

Note

1. It also does not review works that have discussed financial transactions or debtor–creditor relationships with the dead (see, for example, Cannell 1999; Klima 2002; Morris 2000).

References

Abolafia, M. 1996. *Making markets: opportunism and restraint on Wall Street.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Amit, V. 2001. A clash of vulnerabilities: citizenship, labor, and expatriacy in the Cayman Islands. *American Ethnologist* 28: 574–94.

Appadurai, A. 1990. Disjuncture and difference in the global cultural economy. *Public Culture* 2: 1–24.

Baker, W.E. 1984. The social structure of a national securities market. *American Journal of Sociology* 89: 775–811.

Bloch, M. and J. Parry 1989. Introduction: money and the morality of exchange. In *Money and the morality of exchange* (eds) J. Parry and M. Bloch. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bornstein, E. 2003. *The spirit of development: Protestant NGOs, morality, and economics in Zimbabwe*. New York: Routledge.
Callon, M. 1998. Introduction: the embeddedness of economic markets in economics. In *The laws of the markets* (ed.) M. Callon. Oxford: Blackwell.
Cannell, F. 1999. *Power and intimacy in the Christian Philippines*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Comaroff, J. and J.L. Comaroff 1999. Occult economies and the violence of abstraction: notes from the South African postcolony. *American Ethnologist* 26: 279–303.
de Brunhoff, S.-S. 1992. Fictitious capital. In *The new Palgrave dictionary of money and finance* (vol. 2) (eds) P. Newman, M. Milgate and J. Eatwell. London: Macmillan.
De Goede, M. 2003. Beyond economism in international political economy. *Review of International Studies* 29: 79–97.
de Soto, H. 2000. *The mystery of capital: why capitalism triumphs in the West and fails everywhere else*. New York: Basic Books.
Donaghy, M. 2002. Formality and informality in offshore financial centres. *Social Identities* 8: 271–86.
Elyachar, J. 2002. Empowerment money: the World Bank, non-governmental organizations, and the value of culture in Egypt. *Public Culture* 14: 493–513.
Furnivall, J.S. 1939. *Netherlands India: a study of plural economy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Garsten, C. and A. Hasselström 2003. Risky business: discourses of risk and (ir)responsibility in globalizing markets. *Ethnos* 68: 249–70.
Gates, H. 1996. *China's motor: a thousand years of petty capitalism*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
Geertz, C. 1973. *The interpretation of cultures*. New York: Basic Books.
Geertz, C. 1978. The bazaar economy: information and search in peasant marketing. *American Economic Review* 68 (2): 28–32.
Goffman, E. 1983. The interaction order. *American Sociological Review* 48, 1–17.
Granovetter, M. 1985. Economic action and social structure: the problem of embeddedness. *American Journal of Sociology* 91: 481–510.
Green, S. 2000. Negotiating with the future: the culture of modern risk in global financial markets. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 18: 77–89.
Guha, R. 1981. *A rule of property for Bengal*. New Delhi: Orient Longman.
Guyer, J. (ed.) 1995. *Money matters: instability, values and social payments in the modern history of West African communities*. Oxford: James Currey.
Hampton, M.P. and J.E. Christensen 1999. Treasure island revisited. Jersey's offshore finance centre crisis: implications for other small island economies. *Environment and Planning A* 31: 1619–37.
Harvey, D. 1989. *The condition of postmodernity*. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press.
Helleiner, E. 1994. *States and the reemergence of global finance: from Bretton Woods to the 1990s*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
Hertz, E. 1998. *The trading crowd: an ethnography of the Shanghai stock market*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Ho, K.Z. 2003. Liquefying corporations and communities: Wall Street worldviews and socio-economic transformations in the postindustrial economy. Doctoral thesis, Department of Anthropology, Princeton University.
Hudson, A.C. 1998. Placing trust, trusting place: on the social construction of offshore financial centres. *Political Geography* 17: 915–37.
Ingrassia, C. 1998. *Authorship, commerce, and gender in early eighteenth-century England: a culture of paper credit*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Keynes, J.M. 1923. Tract on monetary reform. In *Collected writings of John Maynard Keynes* (vol. 4). London: Macmillan.
Klima, A. 2002. *The funeral casino: meditation, massacre, and exchange with the dead in Thailand*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Knorr Cetina, K. and U. Bruegger 2000. The market as an object of attachment: exploring

postsocial relations in financial markets. *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 25: 141–68.
Knorr Cetina, K. and U. Bruegger 2002. Global microstructures: the virtual societies of financial markets. *American Journal of Sociology* 107: 905–50.
Law, R. 1999. Finance and credit in pre-colonial Dahomey. In *Credit, currencies and culture: African financial institutions in historical perspective* (eds) E. Stiansen and J. Guyer. Stockholm: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.
Lépinay, V. 2004. Finance as circulating formulas. *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 27: forthcoming.
Leyshon, A. and N. Thrift 1997. *Money/space: geographies of monetary transformation*. London: Routledge.
MacKenzie, D. 2001. Physics and finance: S-terms and modern finance as a topic for science studies. *Science, Technology and Human Values* 26: 115–44.
MacKenzie, D. 2003. Long-Term Capital Management and the sociology of arbitrage. *Economy and Society* 32: 349–80.
MacKenzie, D. and Y. Millo 2001. Negotiating a market, performing theory: the historical sociology of a financial derivatives exchange. Presented at the European Association for Evolutionary Political Economy conference, Siena, 8–11 November. (Forthcoming, *American Journal of Sociology*.)
Maingot, A. 1995. Offshore secrecy centers and the necessary role of states: bucking the trend. *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 37 (4): 1–24.
Marcus, G. and D. Holmes 2001. The new economy in real time: para-ethnography and the production of anthropological knowledge. Manuscript.
Marshall, D. 1996. Understanding late-twentieth-century capitalism: reassessing the globalization theme. *Government and Opposition* 31: 193–215.
Maurer, B. 1997. *Recharting the Caribbean: land, law and citizenship in the British Virgin Islands*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
Maurer, B. 1999. Forget Locke? From proprietor to risk-bearer in new logics of finance. *Public Culture* 11: 365–85.
Maurer, B. 2002a. Repressed futures: financial derivatives' theological unconscious. *Economy and Society* 31: 15–36.
Maurer, B. 2002b. Anthropological and accounting knowledge in Islamic banking and finance: rethinking critical accounts. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* (n.s.) 8: 645–67.
Mitchell, T. 2002. *Rule of experts: Egypt, techno-politics, modernity*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Miyazaki, H. 2003. The temporalities of the market. *American Anthropologist* 105: 255–65.
Morris, R.C. 2000. *In the place of origins: modernity and its mediums in northern Thailand*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
Nash, J. 1972. The devil in Bolivia's nationalized tin mines. *Science and Society* 36: 221–33.
Palan, R. 1998. Trying to have your cake and eating it: how and why the state system has created offshore. *International Studies Quarterly* 42: 625–44.
Polanyi, K. 1957. *The great transformation: the political and economic origins of our time*. Boston, Mass.: Beacon.
Pryke, M. and J. Allen 2000. Monetized time-space: derivatives – money's 'new imaginary'? *Economy and Society* 29: 264–84.
Rabinow, P. 1995. *French modern: norms and forms of the social environment*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
Rawlings, G. 2002. 'Once there was a garden, now there is a swimming pool': inequality, labour and land in Pango, a peri-urban village in Vanuatu. Doctoral thesis, Department of Anthropology, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University.
Riles, A. n.d.(a). Making white things white: legal theory as ethnographic subject. *Ethnos*, forthcoming.
Riles, A. n.d.(b). Real time: governing the market after the failure of knowledge. Unpublished manuscript in author's possession, subsequently published in modified form: (2004) Real time: unwinding technocratic and anthropological knowledge. *American Ethnologist* 31 (3): 392–405.

Roberts, S.M. 1994. Fictitious capital, fictitious spaces: the geography of offshore financial flows. In *Money, power and space* (eds) S. Corbridge, N. Thrift and R. Martin. Oxford: Blackwell.
Robinson, J. 1960. Lecture delivered at Oxford by a Cambridge economist. In *Collected economic papers*, Vol. 4, Joan Robinson. Oxford: Blackwell.
Stiansen, E. and J. Guyer 1999. Introduction. In *Credit, currencies and culture: African financial institutions in historical perspective* (eds) E. Stiansen and J. Guyer. Stockholm: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.
Taussig, M.T. 1980. *The Devil and commodity fetishism in South America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
Tickell, A. 2000. Dangerous derivatives: controlling and creating risks in international money. *Geoforum* 31: 87–99.
Tsing, A. 2000. Inside the economy of appearances. *Public Culture* 12: 115–44.
Williamson, T. 2002. Incorporating a Malaysian nation. *Cultural Anthropology* 17: 401–30.
World Bank 1996. *From plan to market: world development report, 1996*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Zaloom, C. 2003. Ambiguous numbers: trading technologies and interpretation in financial markets. *American Ethnologist* 30: 258–72.

12 Distribution and redistribution

Thomas C. Patterson

Both anthropology and economics were constituted as disciplines in the context of a debate that began about 1750. This discourse is concerned with the rise of modern capitalism and its impact on peoples in both the core and peripheral areas of its development. One explanation of the difference between the two fields asserts that economists have sought to account for these changes in terms of universally applicable models of human nature – for instance, that human beings are naturally economising – whereas anthropologists have stressed the importance of culture and its shaping effects on behaviour, both individually and in the aggregate (Geertz 1984). As Joel Kahn (1990), Heath Pearson (2000) and others have shown, the inter-relationships of anthropology and economics are actually more complicated, and both contain in different ways elements of the dialogue among the diverse strands of liberal, romantic and Marxist social thought. Kahn further notes that concerns about cultural otherness manifested in both fields in the late nineteenth century occurred at a historical moment when traditional communities in both core and peripheral areas were being enmeshed increasingly in capitalist social relations and transformed differentially. One should add that new cultural identities were also forged in the process.

A concern with the inter-relations of production and distribution has been an important feature of this debate. From the eighteenth century onward, classical political economists, including Karl Marx, based their arguments on the labour theory of value, distinguishing between (1) the amount of goods required to sustain the members of a society and to ensure its reproduction and (2) surplus production above and beyond those subsistence needs. While Adam Smith and others argued that capitalist wages refracted subsistence needs and that surplus (profit) was 'the residual after wages have been paid', Marx asserted that wages and profits were determined by historical conditions rather than subsistence needs (Calhoun 2002: 127). In his view, 'production creates the objects which correspond to given needs; distribution parcels them up according to social laws' (Marx 1973 [1857–58]: 89). Twentieth-century neoclassical economists, in contrast, have rejected the labour theory of value, claiming instead that distribution is based on the costs of goods and various production factors as these are determined by the interaction of supply and demand in the market.

Karl Polanyi (1957 [1944]: 47–55, 272; see Isaac chap. 1 supra), building

on the work of anthropologists like Bronislaw Malinowski (1922; see Strathern and Stewart chap. 14 infra), also related distribution to exchange (circulation). Unlike the neoclassical economists, Polanyi realised that market exchange and economies were historically contingent rather than universal. He argued that many societies had non-market economies; economic behaviour was rooted in the social organisation of these groups and was based on principles of reciprocity (exchange between groups of kin), householding (production for use) and redistribution (collective pooling and reallocation of goods by a central authority). Beginning with Elman Service (1971 [1962]: 134), a number of anthropologists have viewed redistributive activities as virtually the exclusive basis of chiefly authority in stratified kin societies; they have argued that permanent, paramount chiefs coordinated large-scale production projects as well as the economic specialisation of households or communities located in different ecological habitats. A few have continued to argue that the control chiefs exerted in the reallocation of goods was the basis of state formation. Other anthropologists have focused less on redistributive activities of chiefly men and women than on the mutual rights and obligations of chiefly and non-chiefly peoples (estates) in stratified kin societies and on the tensions that exist between them; they have also urged examining the dialectics of class and state formation instead of arguing that chiefdoms somehow automatically transform themselves into tributary states (Gailey 1987; Sahlins 1963).

Many, but certainly not all, anthropologists and economists have subscribed to the idea of progress; that is, the view that the processes underlying the development of society in general and of modern capitalist societies in particular are unidirectional, irreversible and inevitable. The uncritical adoption of this perspective buttresses the erasure of what we know or what we can infer with varying degrees of certainty about other societies, past and present, from archaeological, historical and ethnographic information. For example, there is evidence from different parts of the world of societies, past and present, in which economic rationality and market exchange are either non-existent or not very important, and in which there are few, if any, incentives to engage in the production of a surplus. There is also evidence of societies that lack exploitative social relations and of state-based societies, both ancient and modern, that either fell apart or seem to be in the process of doing so (Gailey 1987; Lee 2003; Patterson 1992; Szelényi 1988; Szelényi and Szelényi 1991). In a phrase, primitive communism, what Eric Wolf (1982) called the kin-communal mode of production, has been and probably continues to be a reality, and class and state formation is probably still best viewed as a two-way street.

My aim in this chapter is to examine how the relations of distribution differ from one form of society to another. As Marx (1981 [1894]: 927) noted many

years ago, what distinguishes societies manifesting different modes of production is 'the specific economic form in which unpaid surplus labour [or goods] is pumped out of the direct producers'. What distinguishes direct producers in capitalist states from those in tributary and tribal (kin-organised) societies is that they have been separated from the means of production, whereas the latter retain possession or control over them as well as over portions of the goods they produce and their labour time. While the appropriation of surplus value during the production process is typical of capitalist production relations, it is not characteristic of either tributary states or the various kinds of tribal societies that were forged on the margins of states. In tribute-based societies as diverse as Han China, Byzantium or the Inca empire, surplus goods or labour were typically appropriated by political or extra-economic means from conquered or otherwise annexed subject peoples (Haldon 1993).

I shall discuss distribution and redistribution in terms of the tribal (kin-organised), tributary-state and peripheral capitalist societies traditionally examined by anthropologists. With regard to tribal societies, however, it is useful to keep two things in mind. First, not all of the tribal societies described by anthropologists and historians are kin-organised. Some, for example Dahomey and Hawaii, are more accurately described as tributary states, and several anthropologists have recommended not using the term 'tribal' to refer to them. Second, tribes are simultaneously 'administrative units forced upon varied and politically autonomous groups in colonial contexts' and often hierarchically structured 'response[s] to the necessity of defence against imperialist efforts to dominate a given area' (Diamond 1991: 544). The conditions of state formation create resistance on a number of cultural and political fronts. The abilities of tribal societies to resist tribute exactions or becoming enmeshed in capitalist wage relations are varied and historically contingent.

Kin-organised societies and the communal mode of production

The most distinctive features of tribal societies manifesting the kin-communal mode of production are (1) collective ownership of the primary means of production and (2) the absence of social division of labour, in which the members of one group permanently appropriate the social product or labour of the direct producers. In other words, social relations are not exploitative in the sense that one group does not extort product or labour from the other throughout the entire developmental cycle. Eleanor Leacock (1982: 159) has argued that there is no exploitation in these societies because of the unity of the production process and the participation of all adults in the production, distribution, circulation and consumption of social product. This means that each individual is dependent on the community as a whole. It also means that

there are no structural differences between producers and non-producers. Such a distinction would exist only from the perspective of a given individual who is too young, too old or not a participant in a particular labour process; however, the distinction would disappear when the focus is extended beyond that of a single individual or a single labour process. It becomes inverted from one labour process to another, as a direct producer in one instance becomes a consumer in the next.

Let us consider, as an example, how production, distribution and consumption are inter-related among the Dobe Ju/'hoansi, a foraging people who live in the Kalahari Desert and had only vague notions of the Botswana and South African states in the 1960s when anthropologist Richard Lee (2003: 46–58) first lived with them. The core living group of Ju/'hoansi society consists of siblings of both sexes, their spouses and children who live in a single camp and move together for at least part of the year. When the November rains come to the Dobe waterhole in northwestern Botswana, the camp may expand to include the spouses' siblings, their spouses and children as well as a steady stream of visitors. Plant foods collected by women are pooled within families and shared with other families. Men hunt, and a kill brings prestige to the successful hunter who in reality distributes the meat to his family, parents, parents-in-law and siblings. However, the meat does not belong to the hunter but rather to the owner of the arrow he used to dispatch his prey. Both men and women lend and give arrows to men; thus, it is the arrow's owner, not the hunter, who is responsible for distributing the meat and for any glory or hostility that results from it. If the arrow's owner is present, the hunter shares the meat with him or her; if the arrow's owner is elsewhere, the hunter saves a portion of dried meat which he presents when they get together.

In kin-organised societies, men and women typically share the products of their labour with a range of kin; however, who constitutes kinfolk is often defined in several different ways and, thus, the category may be an ambiguous one. Let us consider for a moment how the Ju/'hoansi describe kin. Three distinct kinship systems operate simultaneously among them. The first involves the genealogical terms an individual uses to refer to his mother, father, son, daughter, older siblings and younger siblings; it distinguishes generations and relative age within a generation and lumps older and younger siblings of both sexes. In general, men and women joke with other members of their own generation and the generations of their grandparents and grandchildren; they show respect and reserve when dealing with members of their parents' and children's generations. The second kinship system is based on personal names; there are relatively few men's and women's names, and these are always gender linked. Thus, men and women share names with many other Ju/'hoansi. The possession of common names trumps genealogical ties;

it also means, for instance, that an individual would call anyone with his father's name 'father', and that he would be called by various terms depending on what his name meant to another person (similarly with someone having the same name as a woman's mother). The third kinship system is based on the principle that the older person determines the kin terms that will be used in a relation with another individual. The simultaneous operation of the three kinship systems makes kin out of virtually everyone in Ju/'hoansi society, both those who are related biologically and those who are not. It tremendously expands the range of individuals with whom the products of labour are potentially shared (Lee 2003: 59–76).

The Ju/'hoansi demand high levels of sharing and tolerate low levels of personal accumulation. Charges of stinginess and arrogance are the most serious accusations one individual can make about the behaviour of another. A woman who refuses to share foods she has collected is stingy, while the hunter who boasts about his success is arrogant. While there are powerful levelling mechanisms among the Ju/'hoansi and other kin-organised societies, this does not mean that all kin-organised societies manifesting the kin-communal mode of production lack social differentiation or that interpersonal relations are not occasionally onerous or oppressive, or even that wealth differentials are absent. In some of these societies, especially those with stratified kin systems like the Tongan Islands in the early nineteenth century, individuals and groups occasionally do withdraw from direct labour and depend on the labour of others. However, their ability to appropriate labour depends not only on the positions of authority they occupy in the hierarchical kinship system but also on the continued goodwill of the community, rather than on force or control of the means of production. This authority is fragile. To threaten the community's customary standard of living with excessive demands invites resistance and denial of prestations. The appearance of a potential social division of labour within such societies creates tensions that make these hierarchies unstable, unless the kin antagonisms they generate are deflected by the mediating practices and institutions of extraction and rulership of the state.

Let us consider how production, distribution and consumption are inter-related in a kin-organised society with a stratified kinship system. Christine Gailey (1987) pointed out that, in early-nineteenth-century Tongan society, everyone was ranked relative to everyone else according to three potentially ambiguous and contradictory principles: (1) older was superior to younger; (2) maleness was superior to femaleness; (3) sisters were higher ranked than brothers. Moreover, people were also ranked collectively according to their genealogical proximity to a shared, founding ancestor and belonged to one or the other of two overarching hereditary estates: chiefly and non-chiefly peoples. Only the highest-ranking chiefly people were titled. They attempted

to support their claims to titles by reference to genealogical accounts that spanned more than a hundred generations and described the activities and deeds of named ancestors. However, these accounts, which were kept by chiefly women, contained another source of ambiguity: personal names in Tonga were not gender linked. As a result, while all relationships were potentially charged with inequality, the ambiguity which existed meant that there was also considerable room for manoeuvring, especially in successional disputes and attempts by chiefly women to consolidate their rank.

The division of labour in Tongan society refracted rank, age, gender, kin connections and skill (Gailey 1987: 84–105). Chiefly men holding the highest-ranking titles withdrew from direct production and delegated use-rights to lower-ranking district chiefs who provided labour as well as perishable and durable goods. The district chiefs oversaw the activities of non-chiefly peoples who were bound to the land but had hereditary use-rights to the means of production and to resources obtained through kin connections. While non-chiefly men farmed and fished, all women made woven mats and bark cloth (wealth objects or valuables) that were infused with their rank. The ranking systems refracting age and gender also functioned as rules of distribution. Thus, older siblings were able to claim labour and products from their younger siblings, and sisters by virtue of their higher rank had claims on the labour and products of their brothers as well as on those of their brothers' wives. These rules of distribution reflected both the diminished importance of households based on the nuclear family (the husband–wife pair) as well as the greater importance of the relationships that existed among siblings.

Members of the chiefly estate also had claims on the labour and products of the non-chiefly peoples. Gailey (1987: 93) writes that 'the first results of any productive activity, the first fruits of any harvest – especially of yams – and unusual or high-quality products, fish, other foods, and so on were destined for the chiefs'. The claims of chiefs on commoners and on one another's products by virtue of their relative rank were particularly apparent during the annual 'first fruits' ceremony that was held before the yam harvest. Non-chiefly men prepared an early-ripening variety of yam and baskets of fish, while the women made decorated bark cloth and mats. The men and women each presented their goods to the chiefs. The chiefs retained portions of the prepared foods for the gods, for their own use and for lower-ranking members of the chiefly estate; the rest was given back to the commoners to ensure that no one left the day-long festivities hungry or without food to take home. Chiefly women also made bark cloth and mats that they gave to other chiefly people, enhancing the status of the recipients in the process.

State formation and tribal societies

There was a crisis in Tongan society following European contact in the early

nineteenth century that affected both production and distribution. Several interacting processes culminated in the imposition of state institutions and the crystallisation of a social-class structure. First, the Wesleyan Methodist missionaries provided a patriarchal ideology that simultaneously ignored the traditional power of sisters and asserted the existence of an immutable hierarchy that contrasted with the ambiguous ranking system of traditional Tongan society. The paramount chief allied himself with the Methodists and seized on their worldview as a justification for marginalising his sisters and for asserting his primacy over the other chiefs. Second, the Europeans also provided an endless stream of guns that were used to intensify successional disputes. Increased warfare underwrote the political unification of the archipelago, the replacement of the customary communal landholding practices with allotments to individual men over the age of 16 and the imposition of tax-rents. This provided the king with a steady source of revenue; it curbed the power of the local chiefs, who no longer had access to the labour of men who held individual allotments; and it provided incentives to those allotment holders to engage in the production of cash crops, like copra (dried coconut) or coffee, that could be sold or to sell their labour power to others. Third, a legal code enacted after 1850 redefined crime and morality and specified both monetary fines and periods of forced labour as penalties. It also banned women from wearing tapa cloth garments to church and thereby forced them to purchase imported cotton fabrics (Gailey 1987: 194–247).

In some instances, states with omnipresent armies or police forces have distorted production relations as well as the rules governing distribution in kin-communal societies on their margins and succeeded, at least temporarily, in atomising the community in ways that allowed the states to specify both the form and timing of tribute exactions. In societies like the Maasai of East Africa, production, consumption and taxation occur at the level of the individual household. However, the reproduction of Maasai society and culture in the context of the colonial state took place when the members of the various households participated in periodic ceremonies and when they lent cattle to kin and friends residing in other regions as a hedge against famine and drought (Rigby 1992: 35–97). In a phrase, the social reproduction of the Maasai continues to be based on pre-colonial forms of distribution, notably sharing, the use of common land and participation in regular community activities such as the periodic age-grade ceremonies.

In other instances, tribal societies have successfully defended communal control over use-rights, labour and the disposition of their members; however, in the process, the various dimensions of the division of labour – age, gender, life experience and kin role – were separated from one another, and a person's status came to be defined in terms of one or two dimensions, typically age and gender, instead of an amalgam. As a result, higher-status individuals, usually

older men, came to exert greater control over the labour and products of the community than women or younger men (Kahn 1981). The Guro of the Ivory Coast exemplify this social type. Emmanuel Terray (1972: 137) argues that Guro society manifests two modes of production: (1) a tribal-village system in which the means of production are owned collectively, authority is intermittent and temporary, and distribution is egalitarian; and (2) a lineage system in which the means of production, while owned collectively, are held by a single elder male whose authority is continuous and who appropriates foodstuffs and other goods produced by his dependent, younger kin. He then redistributes this surplus, 'us[ing] it mainly to obtain wives for the same juniors … If he fails to honour this obligation, he will find that his dependents leave him and it will follow that he loses his position as an elder' (Terray 1972: 172).

In still other instances, tribal communities have from time to time removed themselves altogether from the influence of nearby states or rid themselves of kin who proclaimed themselves rulers. Pierre Clastres (1987 [1974]: 214–16) describes a series of events that occurred among the Tupi-Guarani of Brazil during the last decades of the fifteenth century, when fiery orators went from village to village warning them about the destructive effects of chiefly power and exhorting them to rise up against those who would be chiefs. Similarly, Richard Lee (2003: 178) relates that, by the mid-1980s, eight groups of Ju/'hoansi had already moved away from the strategic hamlets established a decade earlier by the South African Defence Force and resettled in remote areas of Botswana and Namibia. They are now reoccupying their traditional campsites. The implications in both cases is that the communities sought to re-establish traditional forms of distribution that contrasted with those imposed by the state.

Tributary states and the tributary mode of production

Anthropologists have also investigated a number of tributary states. Samir Amin (1976: 13–58) coined the terms 'tributary' or 'tribute-paying' to refer to a variety of precapitalist, state-based societies where, as in the early civilisations found in Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas, labour or goods were extracted through extra-economic (political) means from the direct producers by the state apparatus or the ruling class that controlled it. Tributary states have several distinctive features, the most important of which is that kin-organised communities continue to be the dominant units of production in the society, even though their survival is continually threatened by the claims and exactions of a state that is either unwilling or unable to reorganise production on a non-kin basis. While the state is able to intervene in the production and reproduction of these local communities, its survival depends on their continued existence. Production in tributary societies is organised for use

rather than exchange; the goods kept by the producers as well as those appropriated by the state and the dominant class are used or consumed rather than exchanged. Tribute is not always extracted exclusively by means of force, since the direct producers might acquiesce or even agree to these exactions, particularly when they are threatened. Since exploitation is the most distinctive feature of any class-based society, resistance is equally symptomatic; as a result, class conflict is the fundamental relationship between the constituent classes of tributary states. As long as the kin or village communities retain control over their lands and labour, over their own subsistence production and social reproduction, they deprive the state and its ruling classes of some of the goods and labour their members wish to consume. As long as the state and its dominant classes are unable to exact tribute consistently from subject communities, their members often seek the goods and services they have lost or desire through expansionist policies that exploit or subjugate peoples on their periphery. Merchant classes are typically active on the margins of tributary states (Patterson 1992: 25).

Inca society was one of a number of small states, chieftainships, tribes and autonomous kin-communities that existed in the central Andes in the early fifteenth century. The dynastic traditions of Inca society suggest that it began as an estate-ordered chieftainship, much like the Tongan society described above. The chiefly and non-chiefly estates were divided into corporate landholding groups; each of the chiefly corporations had a founding patriarch and property to support his descendants. Civil unrest, political intrigues and assassinations, and invasions by neighbouring groups formed the backdrop against which imperial institutions and practices developed in the 1430s. The ruling class that emerged was composed of the leader who would be king, the members of his corporation and collateral kin who were war leaders, overseers of subject populations or priests at shrines that served the interests of this group. The Inca state expanded rapidly during the next 70 years and extended more than 3000 miles from northern Ecuador to central Chile and Argentina.

The Inca state extracted labour from subject populations; it provided the food, tools and lodging necessary, while the men and women drawn from diverse local communities provided their labour power for specified periods of time. Given the division of labour in traditional Andean society, subject men farmed on lands appropriated by the state and its ruler, participated in public works projects (road construction) or served in the army; subject women wove cloth and made beer. A portion of the foodstuffs and beer appropriated by the state was returned to the communities whose members produced them; woven cloth was also redistributed, some to the subject populations themselves and some to men deemed deserving by the state.

The administrative organisation of the Inca state is typically described as

pyramidal, with the ruler at the top, provincial governors drawn from his kin in the middle and non-Inca leaders overseeing the activities of their local communities. Census-takers and inspectors articulated the Inca and non-Inca layers of the imperial administration. They preserved the new internal order imposed on the local communities by the imperial state. The census-takers counted subjects and made tax assessments. The inspectors reported on the activities of provincial governors and local leaders to the emperor and his counsellors.

Different rules of distribution existed in local communities, like Huarochirí in the central highlands of Peru. Here land and water rights were held by a series of bilateral kindreds whose members claimed descent either through male or female lines from a founding ancestor. In practice, plots of land located in different ecological zones were held and worked by the members of individual households affiliated with those kindred. While the households were the basic production and consumption units of the community, they also shared a portion of the foodstuffs and raw materials they produced with kin residing in other parts of their homeland. At one level, this ensured the self-sufficiency of the local community. At another level, a further portion of their product and labour power was appropriated by the community to support shrines, repair irrigation canals or to have festivals that underwrote the demographic and social reproduction of the community itself. Significant portions of the foodstuffs, beer and other goods appropriated at the community level were consumed in the process (Spalding 1984).

In his extended discussion of tributary states, John Haldon (1993) argued that tax and rent are two variants of the same form of surplus appropriation; both are based on the existence of a peasant producing class that retains control, but not ownership, of its means of production. In late Roman and Byzantine society, the state and landlords appropriated labour and goods through various forms of tax and rent. From the perspective of the state and the landlords who owned property, tax and rent appeared to be different. From the perspective of the peasants, they were similar. Haldon proceeded to point out that, while this basic form of surplus appropriation remained the same, what changed in Byzantine society as the power of the state weakened were the institutional forms in which surplus was distributed.

In the early years of the Byzantine society, the state appropriated surplus and distributed it through the state apparatus. By the eleventh century the peasants, who were increasingly subordinated, handed over surplus to tax collectors who passed it directly to the owners of private estates. In other words, as the power of the centralised state waned, control over direct producers in rural areas passed increasingly to private landlords. What changed was the identity of those who had the ability to extract goods and labour. Thus, Haldon (1993: 140–202) drew distinctions between states with

bureaucracies that maintained control over the appropriation and distribution of surplus, from those with ruling families and their retinues and those in which power was effectively decentralised. In his view, the interplay of the forms of surplus extraction and the relations of surplus distribution imposed constraints on tributary states that refracted struggles within the ruling class and between that class and the state apparatus. In a phrase, conflicts over the distribution of resources in which the state loses tend to promote its disintegration or decentralisation; however, when state officials win, the central authority is strengthened while that of the oppositional groups is weakened.

The dialectic between surplus appropriation and surplus distribution is evident in the changing organisational forms of the state in tributary societies as well as in changes in the composition of their ruling classes. For example, in the early years of the Inca imperial state, the ruling class was composed almost exclusively of the ruler and his close kin. As the empire grew, leaders from diverse local groups were incorporated into the lower echelons of the state apparatus, and their relations with the emperor were cemented through marriages between their daughters and the ruler. The male offspring of these unions were ethnically Inca and hence potential heirs to the throne. As sons of the ruler, they had direct or indirect access to the labour of the imperial subjects. In theory at least, the sons also had an equal chance of ascending to the throne and, hence, were in competition with one another. Since each son maintained close ties with his mother's kin, he was able to call upon them when successional disputes erupted. The loyalties and alliances each son established through their mother with maternal kin tipped the balance in several disputes over succession to the Inca throne in the fifteenth century. The Inca state ultimately began to disintegrate in the 1520s when it was no longer able to contain a successional dispute among rival claimants to the throne and the civil wars that typically erupted when successional disputes occurred. These also fuelled regionally-based secessions from the state as well as the development of new relations of distribution (Patterson 1985).

Capitalist societies and the capitalist mode of production

In the division of labour that developed in the social sciences from the end of the nineteenth century, the objects of anthropological inquiry were typically societies on the peripheries of industrial or colonial states, whereas their sociological colleagues concerned themselves with the connections among immigration, the proletarianisation of peasant communities and industrialisation. The societies of concern to anthropologists either were struggling to retain important aspects of their traditional way of life or were in the process of being enmeshed in capitalist wage relations. Consequently, the economic relations that existed in those communities often appeared different

from those that prevailed in societies dominated by industrial capitalism and the capitalist mode of production.

Moreover, the economic relations that developed on the periphery of the capitalist world were diverse and continue to be so. In some peripheral societies, like that of the northern Yangzi delta of China early in the twentieth century, the direct producers were sub-proletarians who were unable to subsist and reproduce themselves and their kin exclusively on the basis of wages; they supplemented their wages with traditional subsistence activities that yielded foodstuffs and durable goods and with petty commodity production (Walker 1999). In others, like Pisté on the Yucatán Peninsula, peasants and rural proletarians became townfolk increasingly engaged in artisanal production (Castañeda 1995). In still others, individuals who trucked with outsiders became 'big-men' or 'men of renown' in their own communities (Sahlins 1963). In a phrase, the object of anthropological inquiry has been societies that manifest articulations of capitalist and non-capitalist modes of production. As a result, the forms of distribution and redistribution that have emerged in those societies are as diverse as the production relations described above. Let us examine a couple of examples in more detail.

James Greenberg (1981) unravels the political–economic and symbolic aspects of the seemingly wasteful expenditures of resources by the civil–religious organisations that sponsor saints' fiestas in the Indian communities in southern Mexico and northern Central America. In Yaitepec, Oaxaca, the community members hold their lands in common; that is, the means of production are parcelled out to member families and fields cannot be sold by those who possess them. While the community produces many of the foodstuffs and goods required for the social reproduction of labour, its members also purchase needed manufactured goods in stores and markets that are monopolised by an elite whose members reside in Oaxaca city. Consequently, the community members are forced to grow cash crops and sell labour power in order to buy those goods and to pay taxes. After the men in the community marry, usually in their early twenties, they undertake their first religious *cargo*, which entails caring for a particular saint and sponsoring its annual fiesta; by the time men are in their sixties, they have typically undertaken four or five such *cargos*. As a result, they require steadily increasing amounts of cash to fulfil these obligations.

Greenberg reveals a number of important facts about the *cargo* system in Yaitepec and, by extension, other corporate Indian communities in the region. First, more than half of the often substantial cash expenditures on saints' fiestas involve the purchase of food which is either consumed during the ceremony or taken home by the members of the community. Second, the majority of the rituals in Yaitepec occur immediately before the harvests in October, when the availability of food grows steadily scarcer with each

passing day and the signs of malnutrition increase. Third, the amount of food redistributed during the fiestas of this part of the year is sufficient to provide every man, woman and child in the community with food for 41 days. Thus, in Yaitepec, at least, 'the fiesta system reduces the risks of "starvation"' (Greenberg 1981: 152). Fourth, the redistribution of wealth resulting from service in the fiesta system is a levelling mechanism, buttressed by ideologies of egalitarianism and reciprocity, that reduces differences within the community. Fifth, as community members have been differentially drawn into the production of coffee and wealth differentials have increased, 'the leveling mechanisms and traditional obligations which function to minimize the cleavages in the community become less and less effective at resolving the actual inequalities that do exist. This process inevitably brings "individualism" into conflict with "egalitarian" ideology and creates frequent, spasmodic, and sometimes violent interpersonal quarrels' (Greenberg 1981: 198). Finally, there is considerable variation in the fiesta system from one community to another; it appears that the production of cash crops, like coffee, on the communal lands held by particular families combined with the ideology of individualism and the alienation it entails diminishes the amount of wealth that is ultimately redistributed.

Greenberg has suggested that the fiesta system is undermined by increased production for the market, as men are increasingly reluctant to accept *cargos* and the responsibilities they entail. As a result, *cargos* will not be filled; fiestas will not be held; ever-decreasing amounts of wealth will be redistributed within the community. This potentially opens the community to even further capitalist penetration and exploitation. While not necessarily disagreeing with Greenberg's prediction, there has been a steadily increasing number of accounts describing individuals who, after migrating to the United States for work, maintain and renew ties with their kin and neighbours in Indian communities throughout Latin America (for example, Hulshof 1991). A number agree to run as candidates for civic office in local elections or accept *cargos* in the fiesta system. While it is hard to document this number, many Latin American immigrants maintain their ties through remittances, which grew from US$4 billion in 1990 to an estimated US$23–26 billion in 2002 (Rechard and Dickerson 2002).

Carlos Vélez-Ibáñez, Guillermina Nuñez and Dominique Rissolo (2002) discuss other aspects of transnational communities. They focus on the rural settlements, or *colonias*, which have developed since the early 1980s in agricultural areas north of the US–Mexico border from Texas to California. The 2000 or so *colonias* currently have a combined population of a million or more people, mostly of Mexican origin. Since neither the state or federal governments nor the capitalist farmers provide housing or services to these settlements, their residents effectively subsidise the agricultural industry north

of the border. Nearly 70 per cent of the men and women in El Recuerdo, the *colonia* they investigated, work for local farmers engaged in commercial agriculture; another 10 per cent are labour contractors; a few own small businesses: a garage, grocery store and restaurant-bar; the remainder participate in various facets of the informal and underground economies. A family of six in El Recuerdo has a mean yearly income of about US$22,500, more than 60 per cent of which is spent on food, payments on cars or trucks, gasoline and automotive repairs. A family of six also spends about US$26,000 a year, which is nearly US$4000 more than its members earn.

As Vélez-Ibáñez and his associates note, the households of El Recuerdo continually attempt to balance income with overexpenditure and struggle to keep the negative income ratios to less than 20 per cent. They do so through pooling resources, rotating credit associations and, when all else fails, participation in the informal and underground economy, which may yield significant returns but carries large risks, for example arrest, incarceration, seizure of property and deportation. Typically, the members of a household pool their income, wages and future earnings in order to make downpayments on land, trailers or automobiles. For example, a married couple wishing to buy a lot or a trailer will call upon parents and siblings for assistance; in practice, this means that many of the households in El Recuerdo are multi-generational, composed of multiple siblings, their parents, their spouses and their children. New cycles of debt are incurred when younger siblings marry, and cash is consequently pooled again to purchase new housing or make a downpayment on it.

Household members also rely on informal, rotating credit associations that will advance about US$1000 to US$1200 for periods of six months. These loans are used to defray the costs of everyday needs, to reduce debt or to purchase gifts that will be redistributed at various rituals. These associations are mostly in the hands of women. Failing to repay a debt to a relative, a neighbour or a friend, thereby breaking a mutual trust or confidence, is, as Vélez-Ibáñez and his colleagues observe, almost unthinkable and has potentially disastrous consequences given the precarious financial circumstances of the households and the ever-present threat posed by the Immigration and Naturalization Service. The men in the *colonia* typically seek money in other ways. For instance, they will borrow from local moneylenders at high rates for short periods. Here, the threat of physical violence, rather than the stigma of a broken trust and promise, provides the incentive to repay the debt.

These are not the only ways in which wealth is transferred in capitalist societies. Other forms of distribution and redistribution flourish as well. At one level, as Stephen Gudeman (2001: 63–4) observes, ‘goods are transferred within communities and across generations at bridal showers, weddings, baby

showers, birthdays, confirmations, graduations, and other celebrations'. At another level, individuals make gifts of time, services or money to charities and foundations. At still another level, the kind of food sharing that occurs at potluck dinners or picnics cements and reaffirms both interpersonal and social relationships. It is important to note, as Gudeman does, that such forms of redistribution are not carried out in the market nor are they easily taxed by the state.

References

Amin, S. 1976. *Unequal development: an essay on the social formations of peripheral capitalism*. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Calhoun, C. (ed.) 2002. *Dictionary of the social sciences*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Castañeda, Q. 1995. 'The progress that chose a village' measuring zero-degree culture and the 'impact' of anthropology. *Critique of Anthropology* 15(2): 115–48.

Clastres, P. 1987 (1974). *Society against the state*. New York: Zone Books.

Diamond, S. 1991. Tribal society. In *A dictionary of Marxist thought* (ed.) T. Bottomore. Oxford: Blackwell.

Gailey, C.W. 1987. *Kinship to kingship: gender hierarchy and state formation in the Tongan Islands*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Geertz, C. 1984. Culture and social change: the Indonesian case. *Man* (n.s.) 19: 511–32.

Greenberg, J.B. 1981. *Santiago's sword: Chatino peasant religion and economics*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Gudeman, S. 2001. *The anthropology of economy*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Haldon, J. 1993. *The state and the tributary mode of production*. London: Verso.

Hulshof, M. 1991. *Zapotec moves: networks and remittances of U.S.-bound migrants from Oaxaca*. Amsterdam: Koninklijk Nederlands Aardrijkskundig Genootschap.

Kahn, J. 1981. Marxist anthropology and segmentary societies: a review of the literature. In *The anthropology of pre-capitalist societies* (eds) J. Kahn and J. Llobera. London: Macmillan.

Kahn, J. 1990. Towards a history of the critique of economism: the nineteenth-century German origins of the ethnographer's dilemma. *Man* (n.s.) 25: 230–49.

Leacock, E.B. 1982. Relations of production in band society. In *Politics and history in band society* (eds) E. Leacock and R. Lee. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lee, R.B. 2003. *The Dobe Ju/'hoansi*. Belmont, Cal.: Wadsworth.

Malinowski, B. 1922. *Argonauts of the western Pacific*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Marx, K. 1973 (1857–58). *Grundrisse*. New York: Vintage Books.

Marx, K. 1981 (1894). *Capital: a critique of political economy*, vol. 3. New York: Vintage Books.

Patterson, T.C. 1985. Pachacamac – an Andean oracle under Inca rule. In *Recent studies in Andean prehistory and protohistory* (eds) P. Kvietok and D. Sandweiss. Ithaca, NY: Latin American Studies Program, Cornell University.

Patterson, T.C. 1992. *The Inca empire: the formation and disintegration of a pre-capitalist state*. Oxford: Berg.

Pearson, H. 2000. Homo economicus goes native, 1895–1945: the rise and fall of primitive economics. *History of Political Economy* 32: 933–89.

Polanyi, K. 1957 (1944). *The great transformation: the political and economic origins of our time*. Boston, Mass.: Beacon.

Rechard, E.S. and M. Dickerson 2002. Tapping into money wiring. *Los Angeles Times* (28 December): C1.

Rigby, P. 1992. *Cattle, capitalism, and class: Ilparakuyo Maasai transformations*. Philadelphia, Pa.: Temple University Press.

Sahlins, M.D. 1963. Poor man, rich man, big-man, chief: political types in Melanesia and Polynesia. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 3: 285–303.

Service, E. 1971 (1962). *Primitive social organization: an evolutionary perspective*. New York: Random House.

Spalding, K. 1984. *Huarochirí: an Andean society under Inca and Spanish rule*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Szelényi, I. 1988. *Socialist entrepreneurs: embourgoisement in rural Hungary*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
Szelényi, I. and S. Szelényi 1991. The vacuum in Hungarian politics. *New Left Review* 182: 121–38.
Terray, E. 1972. *Marxism and 'primitive' societies: two studies*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
Vélez-Ibáñez, C., G. Nuñez and D. Rissolo 2002. 'Off the backs of others': the political ecology of class formation and transformation among the colonias of New Mexico and elsewhere. In *Both sides of the border: transboundary environmental management issues facing Mexico and the United States* (eds) R. Carson and L. Fernandez. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic.
Walker, K. 1999. *Chinese modernity and the peasant path: semicolonialism in the northern Yangzi delta*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Wolf, E. 1982. *Europe and the people without history*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

13 Consumption

Rudi Colloredo-Mansfeld

For centuries, consumption offered one of the most palpable realms for the West to distinguish itself from the Rest.[1] In 1503, Queen Isabella of Spain decreed that only those American Indians found to consume human flesh could be legally enslaved, motivating colonisers to reject as many natives as possible as cannibals and widen the division between Old world and New. In the late 1800s, indignant missionaries condemned the Kwakiutl potlatch on Vancouver Island where thousands of blankets were burned and canoes destroyed in the course of exuberant feasts. Such practices 'retarded civilizing influences and encouraged idleness among the less worthy Indians', in the words of the first Indian superintendent in 1873 (quoted in Bracken 1997: 35). Later Indian agents would urge jail in order to reform those disposing of goods in this way. Towards the end of the twentieth century, images of Amazonian Indians with painted bodies and video recorders grabbed attention, not because they showed that modernity had arrived in the jungle, but because the strange mix of hi-tech goods and traditional adornment affirmed that primitives still could not get 'progress' quite right (Conklin 1997). As a basic professional habit, anthropologists have long sought to recast such exoticism as coherent cultural practice. For economically-minded anthropologists, spectacular cases of consumption motivate a more specific theoretical agenda. They have been pivotal in efforts to develop socially-centred economic theory.

As anthropologists have explained both the unfamiliar (rainforest VCRs, flaming blankets, porridges of human bone meal) and familiar (Christmas shopping, Barbie dolls, Coca-Cola), they have turned from economists' commitment to the 'sovereignty of individual choice' to the 'sovereignty of relations', both human–human and human–object relations. Certainly, individuals do make decisions, even selfish ones for pleasure or status. But by systematically connecting their choices to topics omitted in economic analysis – the source of preferences, the institutional impact of material use, the intimate experience of an object – anthropologists try to explain the obliging social relationships at work in consumption practice (Orlove and Rutz 1989).

Yet for their shared commitment to the social, anthropologists have disagreed about the scope of consumption's importance. Debates spring up about the relative weight of consuming amid production and exchange, the role of households rather than individuals, and real impact of consumption on the development of the political economy. Offering a loosely historical

perspective here, I sketch five approaches to consumption that are at times complementary and other times competing. Presented here under the labels contractual, ecological, categorical, material and processual, they do not exhaust all that has been done by anthropologists. Rather they illustrate the distinctiveness of anthropology's contribution to the analysis of consumption and, increasingly, consumer society.

First, some definitional issues. In *The world of goods*, an important text for current anthropological study of consumption, Douglas and Isherwood (1979: 57) defined consumption as follows: 'a use of material possessions that is beyond commerce and free within the law'. Its broadness reflects a widely shared analytical goal, to fashion concepts that work both in consumer societies and in less industrialised societies with subsistence economies. By emphasising 'material possessions', though, Douglas and Isherwood productively narrow the discussion. Watching films, sightseeing, reading advertisements, visiting museums and such intangible experiences related to consumption fall outside the primary focus. If cultural studies and allied researchers have made much of dematerialising consumer practice, reducing commodities to signs and consumption to communication (compare Campbell 1995), anthropologists have been at their most creative taking up the physical. The sense that consuming involves the irreversible commitment of goods requiring their replacement emphasises the passage of time, sensory experience, the occupation of space – phenomena basic to human experience and economic practice.

Contractual consumption

Ceremonial feasts like the potlatch mentioned at the outset draw immediate attention to their rich, almost overwhelming physical details. Powerful Kwakiutl men hosted the gatherings (that in fact were not called 'potlatch', but had names such as *kadzitla* [marriage], *tlinagila* [eulachon grease potlatch] and *k'ilas* [feast]) to legitimate the political dominance of their lineage, to consecrate a young man's claim to chiefly title, and to forge alliances between local kin groups. In addition to the gifts of blankets and other trade goods, chiefs would serve great quantities of dry berry cakes, crab apples, viburnum berries, candlefish oil and dried salmon. Guests would partake of this surfeit constrained by a protocol that rewarded discipline in eating. Etiquette demanded that one not ask for food, kept portions small, and limited them to one course (Wolf 1999). Whatever the restrictions, though, participants consumed their fill. When he defined the term 'potlatch', Franz Boas used such phrases as 'to feed, to consume', 'system for the exchange of gifts', and 'place of being satiated' (Mauss 1990: 86 n13).

For Marcel Mauss, the potlatch was a 'total social fact'. He observed that it addressed all major dimensions of social life: economic, political, religious

and social organisation (1990: 38–9). Both Mauss and Boas read the complexity of the event in terms of the obligations it created among people; the sequences of ritualised consumption becoming the contractual nodes that bind and rebind social groups. Seeking to undo Canadian stereotypes of wasteful, backward Indian economies, for example, Boas rationalised the gifts of blankets stacked hundreds deep and the ceremonial meals that stretched for days in terms of capital obligations. The vocabulary of 'capital possessed', 'debts', 'creditors' and 'loans' dominate his analysis (Boas 1899). Eschewing the rhetoric of industrial economies, Mauss abstracts from the potlatch and other ceremonial exchange a general theory of the gift. He locates the power of the gift in its inalienability, its unbreakable tie to the giver that compels the receiver to respond. Subsequent research traditions would refine Mauss's argument, discarding a concern with consumption and limiting his ideas to the sphere of exchange. However, consuming appears as a crucial intermediary in his logic of the gift: 'In all this there is a succession of rights and duties to consume and reciprocate, corresponding to rights and duties to offer and accept' (Mauss 1990: 14). Consumption specifically contributes to the 'intricate mingling of symmetrical and contrary rights'.

Issues of inalienability and obligation so central to contractual notions of material culture have remained important concepts as anthropologists have reopened debates about gifts, commodities, and consumption. Arjun Appadurai's edited volume, *The social life of things* (1986), inspired research by dissolving the binary logic that pitted gifts against commodities. Arguing instead that a good's value hinges on the way exchange is instituted, Appadurai analyses the social settings and ideals that make it possible for an object to swing from alienated, interchangeable commodity to singular, meaning-laden emblem and back again. With chapters on the precocious use of gold in prehistoric Europe, the trade in medieval relics, and the role of homespun in India's independence movement, among others, the volume expands anthropology's concern with the politics of non-capitalist exchange to the politics of value wherever commodities circulate.

Ecological consumption

As anthropology matured as a discipline, the 'total social fact' of feasts was deconstructed. The potlatch received a more explicitly economic analysis and the consumption that took place became read in more individualised terms. Status replaced obligation as an analytic variable; elaborate feasting signalled not so much social contracts but prestige economies. Thus, in his synthetic overview of anthropology Melville Herskovits writes (1948: 287): 'The prestige economy is a topsy-turvy system, where gain comes through expenditure rather than through saving, and the highest position is reserved for those who most conspicuously spend the contributions of the less privileged,

for the vicarious enjoyment of the contributors'. The argument owes much to Thorstein Veblen's (1944 [1899]) discussion of conspicuous consumption (Herskovits 1948: 286). Yet, Herskovits seems unable to accept the purely emulative individual that Veblen describes. Enjoyment remains collective, even if fundamentally unequal.

In North American anthropology, the economic turn produced an even more hard-nosed materialist analysis of consumption. Extending long-standing ideas that linked culture with natural environments, ecological anthropology takes a distinctive form in the 1960s with the work of Rappaport (1984 [1968]) and Lee and De Vore (1968), among others (for example, Flannery 1968). In the seminal work *Pigs for the ancestors*, Rappaport (1984 [1968]) examines feasting, consumption ritual, and food taboos, not for the social world they create, but for the regulation of relationships between people and their environment.

Pigs for the ancestors illustrates how ecological research entailed charting the flow of resources from fields and forests through foods to humans and back to the environment. In a series of dense tables, Rappaport lays out the energy expended by Tsembaga men and women as they raise their crops. We learn, for example, that clearing underbrush requires 0.65 calories per square foot, harvesting taro uses 1.1 calories per pound and so on. Pigs are revealed for their costly energetic inefficiencies:

> The ratio [of energy derived from pigs to energy expended in raising the pigs] could hardly have been better than 1:1 and may, indeed, have been less favorable. That is, it is quite possible that more energy was expended to raise food for pigs than was returned in the form of pork. (Rappaport 1984 [1968]: 62)

Within a dynamic system of energy flows, consumption practices from food taboos to ritual feasts take form as the regulatory mechanisms of the system. Thus, Rappaport extracts from the cultural rules that prohibit fighting men from eating 'cold' foods such as catfish or snakes a system-operator that directs 'most of the subsidiary sources of animal protein to two categories very much in need of them: women and children' (1984 [1968]: 80). In a similar vein, a long chapter lays out how the length of the multi-year ritual cycle that culminates in the year-long *Kaiko* festival 'is regulated by the demographic fortunes of the pig population' (1984 [1968]: 153). More to the point, the dancing, feasting and rituals of the Kaiko that signal the end of years of truce and the commencement of hostilities are a 'means for disposing of a parasitic surplus of animals' (1984 [1968]: 159). The consumption of meat sanctified through the ritual restores a disruptive variable within the broad ecosystem (livestock population) back within sustainable limits.

Seeking ecological explanations on the scale of human cultural evolution, Harris carried the cultural materialist project the farthest. He rigorously

assessed everything from India's sacred cattle to Aztec human sacrifice for their population-level material consequences. Dismissing ideological or psychological explanations of broad patterns of human behaviour, Harris insisted that explanations be tied to 'the specific ecological and reproductive pressures' experienced by people within particular environments (1977: 105). This commitment led in one instance to his famous argument, drawn in large part from Michael Harner's research, that the massive rituals of human sacrifice undertaken by the Aztec elite, involving upwards of 100,000 people, were akin to 'a state sponsored system geared to the production and redistribution of substantial amounts of animal protein in the form of human flesh' (1977: 109). To make the case, Harris elaborates on two points. First, the bodies that tumbled down the pyramids after having their hearts plucked out were in fact cut up and eaten. Second, the Mesoamerican ecosystem lacked protein because the last ice age had left the area 'in a more depleted condition, as far as animal resources are concerned, than any other region' (1977: 110). Having deployed an ecological cost–benefit calculus in this most notorious instance of ritual excess, Harris's subsequent application of cultural materialist logic to the condominiums of Reagan era yuppies seems positively tame (1989: 374–6).

Critiques levelled against the cultural ecology envisaged by Rappaport and Harris have been varied and often intense. Symbolic anthropologists dismiss it as 'functionalist' and 'reductionistic'. Even sympathetic researchers have had trouble defining boundaries of ecosystems that permit Rappaport-style analysis. Those who pursue related topics today embrace the idea of 'political ecology' that emphasises the global economic forces at work in local environments. Yet even as the earlier cultural ecology seems to have lost its audience, two concerns at the centre of its analysis have re-emerged. On the one hand, the problem of the ecological sustainability of consumer society crops up in research on macroscopic issues (US energy use and global warming: Stern et al. 1997) and microscopic ones (the taste for the lips of certain tropical fish and the demise of Pacific ocean reefs: Safina 1997). On the other hand, inspired by Latour's (1999) arguments that society must be seen as a collective of human and non-human agencies, some researchers are coming back to the project of detailing the intimate, regulating relationships between human communities and the material world.

Categorical consumption

The mainstream of consumption studies has pursed a symbolically-oriented path blazed, in part, by a frequent target of Harris's criticisms, Mary Douglas. Where Harris insisted that cultural rules of consumption came down to their distributive consequences for calories, protein and valued material resources, Douglas reads food taboos for the tenacity of human desire to preserve the

clarity of cultural categories. In *Purity and danger* (1966) she argues, for example, that the ancient Israelite pork taboo stems from the taxonomic ambiguities of pigs, animals rendered culturally impure because they had cloven hooves but did not chew a cud the way 'real' ungulates should. Shunning pork preserved the cultural intelligibility of Israelite cuisine.

With the publication of *The world of goods*, Douglas worked with Isherwood to extend the categorical analysis of consumption to the full range of commodities in a modern consumer society. 'Instead of supposing that goods are primarily needed for subsistence plus competitive display, let us assume that they are needed for making visible and stable the categories of culture', they write (Douglas and Isherwood 1979: 59). In this view, goods' utility distracts from their fundamental service to people who accumulate commodities in order to make sense of their place in the world. 'Forget that commodities are good for eating, clothing and shelter; forget their usefulness and try instead the idea that commodities are good for thinking; treat them as a nonverbal medium for the human creative faculty' (1979: 62). In framing the argument, the authors work through hypothetical cases of solitary consumers: the person who wolfs his/her food standing by his/her refrigerator vs. the solitary diner who still uses a butter knife and reserves mint for lamb and mustard for beef. In their analysis, they discern in almost all cases the 'joint production, with fellow consumers, of a shared universe of values' (1979: 67).

Pierre Bourdieu deepened this categorical approach by exposing how class-based systems of preferences for goods take shape in relation to one another. Using data drawn from extensive surveys of working-, middle- and upper-class possessions, tastes for music, interest in photography, enthusiasms for painters and so on, Bourdieu maps 1970s French social spaces. By substituting the term 'social space' for class, he tries to get at a 'set of distinct and co-existing positions which are exterior to one another and which are defined in relation to one another' in fields of economic, social and cultural capital (Bourdieu 1998: 6). Social position, in other words, is not reducible to economic resources or status or education or even any clustered set of these variables (Bourdieu 1984: 106). Rather a person's place in social space (and concomitant authority) emerges through the habitual set of differentiations – among goods, artistic works, physical activities, occupations – that the individual can produce. Consumption matters enormously in all of this for the power of consumers' selections to naturalise divisions among people where little else about their work or training could.

Having titled his work on the power of taste *Distinction*, Bourdieu must later take pains to dispel the 'disastrous' misunderstanding that he is arguing that the search for status drives all human behaviour (Bourdieu 1998: 9). Two key ideas mitigate reading Bourdieu as a simple restatement of Veblen's conspicuous consumption. First, the generative force for Bourdieu's

consumers is not emulation, but a practical (that is, not fully conscious) recurrent decision making that produces a unity of style. Sometimes this appears easily accountable in the ledgers of prestige, for example commercial employers' preference for foreign cars and university teachers' affinity for flea markets. Yet Bourdieu also accounts for why the employers opt for dogs and the teachers cats, a choice that seems less driven by envy and social ambition. Second, ultimately for Bourdieu durable correspondences between any set of objects and specific social positions do not matter. Whether the nobility enters a boxing ring or retreats to a golf course is in itself immaterial. What matters is how the act of discriminating among goods and activities positions the consumer in a field of relations, and consequently produces that field. Indeed 'position-takings' works as a synonym for consumption events in Bourdieu's scheme (Bourdieu 1998: 7).

Leading the symbolic analysis of consumer goods in another direction, Grant McCracken (1988) emphasises cumulative consequences over time, rather that conceptual orchestration of society in the present. His simplest case involves the furnishings of Lois Roget's farmhouse. Having observed Roget's care for and display of oil lamps, dining room sets, the deed for her house, and myriad other objects, McCracken (1988: 49) uses the phrase 'curatorial consumption' to account for 'a pattern of consumption in which an individual treats his or her possessions as having strong mnemonic value, and entertains a sense of responsibility to these possessions that enjoins their conservation, display, and safe transmission'.

McCracken acknowledges how atypical curatorial consumption has become in an era when people inherit little and purchase a lot. The practice, though, fits with other past and current behaviour explored by McCracken that links the substantiation of cultural categories (that is, the project outlined by Douglas and Isherwood) with the problem of change. If, as he writes (1988: 130), consumer goods 'are important and ubiquitous agents of change and continuity', they are also limited in the ways they can be deployed. As a meaning system, for example, commodities work narrowly, communicating best when conforming to standard codes. McCracken, in fact, did an experiment with clothing types and showed that the more subjects mixed and matched elements from different clothing styles (for example, of a hippie and a businessman) the more incoherent the social message. A suit jacket with bellbottoms was more likely to elicit confusion and pity from a viewer, as in 'He's lost his job and is on the skids', than respect for a fresh perspective of, say, a free-spirited businessman (McCracken 1988: 65). Pursuing the possibilities of material innovation through studies of patina, fashion and anomalous purchases, McCracken argues that cultural disorder can be tamed through the symbolic role played by commodities. Goods allow social structure a 'relatively consistent expression in the face of the disruptive

potential of radical social changes', yet they also channel change as this becomes necessary (1988: 137).

Material consumption

Anthropology's concern with the symbolic dimensions of modern consumption unfolds in relation to cultural studies, sociology and the general explosion of consumption studies in the social sciences (Miller 1995a). Across disciplines, a rather individualised variant of the categorical approach came to be stressed. Reviewing the sociological literature on consumption, for instance, Campbell said, 'Generally we may say that special emphasis tends to be placed on those theories that relate consumption to issues of identity and, within this, to those that represent consumption as an activity which conveys information about the consumer's identity to those who witness it' (Campbell 1995: 111). The roots of this approach tap ideas of Barthes (1972) and Baudrillard (1981, 1983) that stressed the role of commodities as signs encoding the myths of consumer ideologies divorced from actual referents. Some anthropological writing seems to move in the direction of lifestyle research (Friedman 1994a; Lofgren 1994).

Yet for practical and theoretical reasons, the lifestyle approach does not prevail in anthropology. On a pragmatic level, most anthropologists are committed to an ethnographic methodology; that is, research that recovers both information about behaviour and beliefs, on the one hand, and the wider contexts that make such behaviour possible and meaningful, on the other. At its most basic, this method pushes anthropologists to examine consumer behaviour beyond moments of purchase. The stereotype of individualised consumers seeking the psychological rewards of a particular lifestyle rarely holds when research opens up to describe the settings and people that bear on prior planning for and subsequent use of a good. Even studies taking shopping as their focus find obligation, duty, love (Miller 1998b) or conversely disempowerment and dehumanisation (Chin 2001) rather than the fulfilment of individual dreams. Indeed, the more thorough the examination of the contexts of shopping, the less mass retail appears as capable of sustaining meaningful relationships and identities (Carrier 1994).

Anthropological consumption theory in the 1980s also directed research away from a purely symbolic or communication approach. Miller's work has been seminal. In *Material culture and mass consumption* (1987) he restores materiality as a key problem of identity and social relations in a consumer society. He departed from cultural studies' preoccupation with a textual analysis of consumption to show the multiple layers – symbolic, temporal, sensory – through which subjectivities form. Asserting the widest significance for this project, Miller refutes the Marxist argument that production represents the only legitimate circumstance in which people develop relations and

political consciousness. Reaffirming Douglas and Isherwood's thesis, he writes that mass consumption is 'the dominant context through which we relate to goods' (Miller 1987: 4) and by extension the means by which we create identities, link ourselves to social groups, express class and taste and form our understanding of ourselves and others (1987: 215). Yet the core action for Miller is not categorisation, but objectification.

Working with the ideas of Georg Hegel, Karl Marx, Nancy Munn and Georg Simmel, Miller charts how the subject forms in a sequence of encounters with the object world. While such unities of subjects and products have been argued for small-scale societies, *Material culture and mass consumption* shows both the relevance and tensions of these arguments when transferred to consumer societies. Forced to redefine the alienable objects of mass production into the inalienable objects of community and selfhood, the consumer habitually tackles a fundamental contradiction in modern society. Moving to decentre capital's power, Miller outlines how producers – including manufacturers, retailers and marketers – survive not by dictating choices to consumers but through interacting with them and adjusting to them. Thus, he pushes his argument about objectification from the individual to society: 'A balance between subjectivism and objectivism can be seen as a balance between the weight assigned to the two main forces of production and consumption' (1987: 168).

Emphasising material culture, Miller has offered fresh takes on such issues as modernity, shopping, Christmas and the political economy. Emblematic of these efforts is Miller's de-escalation of brand name consumer commodities from the realm of 'irrationalized, meta-symbolic life' to one of specific practice. His article, 'Coca Cola: a black sweet drink from Trinidad' seeks precisely 'to plunge us down from a level where Coke is a dangerous icon that encourages rhetoric of the type West versus Islam, or Art versus Commodity and encourages instead the slower building up of a stance towards capitalism which is informed and complex' (Miller 1998a: 170). After reviewing the commercial localisation of Coke in general and its establishment in Trinidad in the wake of US troop deployment in particular, Miller talks about what Trinidadians drink, when and why. What matters to consumers is not the corporate positioning of brands in relation to one another but the difference between the 'black' sweet drink and the 'red' sweet drink. The 'red' drink (actually a category of drinks) conjures up nostalgic images of Trinidad's past, a history of emergence from plantation economies and the transformation of East Indians from indentured labourers in the cane fields to part of the mix of national culture. Perceived as the sweetest of drinks, the red drink supposedly connects both with the sugar-seeking habits of East Indians and with the general fast food tastes of Trinidadians.

In contrast, the black sweet drink is 'summed up in the notion of a "rum and

coke" as the core alcoholic drink for most people of the island' (Miller 1998a: 179). Black sweet drinks are consumed on their own, too, not just Coke but cheaper versions such as 'Bubble Up', produced in an industrial estate near the squatting community where its primary consumers lived (and where Miller carried out his research). They ordered it at local parlours by saying 'gimme a black' or they selected the alternative with 'gimme a red'. The more Miller pursues the story of Coca-Cola, the more rich details of Trinidadian ethnic identities, national self-image and local corporate competition are revealed. Chastising academics for picking Coca-Cola as 'their favourite image of the superficial globality', Miller demonstrates that close attention to actual consumption, and competitive struggle for consumers, sublates the general form of capitalism into the specifics of people, livelihoods, politics and history.

Through review articles, edited volumes and other publishing projects, Miller has been one of the most consistent advocates of the study of modern consumer societies. More pointedly, he insists that studying consumption will transform anthropology, resulting in 'a final expunging of latent primitivism' (Miller 1995b: 269). The breadth of topics employing a material culture approach would seem to bear him out. Tupperware (Clarke 1999), used clothing (Tranberg-Hansen 2000), ethnically correct dolls (Chin 1999) and other everyday products of advanced industrial capitalism have all received critical analysis for their cultural meanings and social consequences. Activities that anthropologists once ignored as trivial, such as catalogue shopping, receive thoughtful treatment in relation to such core theoretical problems of gift exchange, commodification and alienability (Carrier 1990).

Processual consumption

The expanding literature has none the less provoked concern and criticism. In her review of Jonathan Friedman's edited volume, *Consumption and identity*, Mary Weismantel, who has herself researched household consumption as a sphere of power relations and cultural change (Weismantel 1988), rejects the significance of consumption for understanding social structure. She writes (1997: 381), 'this book reveals both the substantive richness of studies of consumption and the theoretical weakness of post-Marxist economic anthropology. Absent the polemical vigour provided by a rousing critique of capital, eschewing Marx's subtle understanding of modernity's essential contradictions, work on consumption no longer holds the promise of reinvigorating postcolonial anthropology'. More moderately, Carrier and Heyman (1997) seek to redirect rather than dismiss consumption studies. Warning that the scholarly turn to consumption is 'dangerously partial', they want to restore the political economy, conflict, inequality and dynamic processes. As a practical matter, they urge shifting the analytical gaze from

'cheap consumables' to housing markets, households, and other institutional structures that constrain and direct consumption.

In fact, a processual approach tackles these concerns in studies of people living in far more uncertain economies than those of North American or European consumer societies. Belizean urban Creole children (Wilk 1994), peri-urban wage earners in the Pacific island nation of Vanuatu (Philibert and Jourdan 1996), the Southern Tswana communities during an era of European missionisation (Comaroff 1997), Haya coffee cultivators of Tanzania (Weiss 1996) count among those faced with rapidly remaking their social world under pressures of capitalist expansion, globalisation and other dislocations of modernity. Anthropologists have turned to consumption as a setting where those changes literally hit home. Picking up the thread of community and household material life, they follow it back to distant fields of power, including colonial ideologies, national development programmes and transnational labour markets.

Sidney Mintz's magisterial study of sugar illustrates the most ambitious effort to see history through consumption. In *Sweetness and power*, Mintz observes: 'A single source of satisfaction – sucrose extracted from the sugar cane – for what appears to be a widespread, perhaps even universal, human liking for sweetness became established in European taste preferences at a time when European power, military might, and economic initiative were transforming the world' (Mintz 1985: xxv). In trying to account for the relation between sugar and European power, he departs from past approaches that would have sought the answer primarily in forms of production, the regulation of trade, the role of the state and so on. While he does attend to those issues, he also insists 'one needs to understand just what makes demand work' (1985: xxv). His long chapter on consumption details fourteenth-century recipes that call for using sugar to spice fish, meats or vegetables that had been so pounded and mashed as to be rendered 'soft and mushy, with its principal ingredients disguised' (1985: 85). He goes on to describe the cunning subtleties (sugar sculptures) served up by the nobility in the seventeenth century, including one that featured a stag that 'bleeds' claret wine when an arrow is removed from its flank (1985: 93). Finally, he shows sugar's transformation from luxury to a basic necessity that furnished quick energy through a debased cuisine of sweetened suet puddings and weakened sugary tea to an overworked nineteenth-century labouring class.

Weismantel similarly uses food to tell the story of capitalism's expansion, but in intimate and day-to-day terms. Her analysis of Andean peasant cuisine during a period of economic crisis during the 1980s illustrates three key elements of a processual approach. First, she draws attention to changes in incomes and resources needed for social reproduction. The parish economy of Zumbagua, Ecuador, centred on barley cultivation and sustained an

indigenous Quichua culture marked as subordinate, in part just for the way Quichua peasants could support themselves through the labour in their fields and the cuisine of their hearths. Yet households in the parish relied on city wages, earnings gained in a national economy that is perceived as ethnically white, to participate fully in community life. The inequities that structured the national economy were felt in gendered terms in the parish. Shut out from most urban jobs, women took growing responsibility for the fields. Contending with national racial ideologies that devalued their labour, men struggled in the city to keep steady jobs. When men succeeded, though, the bread, fruits and other treats they provided for the house upon their return eclipsed the social value of women's crops. The responsibility for different and insecure incomes embedded men and women in ethnically polarised relations of production and set the stage for conflict.

Second, she demonstrates that macroeconomic changes create inconsistency in previously taken-for-granted routines of consumption. Basic hearty breakfasts of toasted ground barley, for example, that farmers once consumed unquestioningly to warm up after working the morning chores now becomes the mark of being a backward Indian in the eyes of successful male wage earners. Bags of bread borne by fathers annoy mothers who laboured to provide a filling meal of grains from their field. Weismantel acknowledges that for subordinate peasants, little of their culture could be taken for granted as unconscious habit or doxa. Yet, she adds, 'in Zumbagua today, the aggressive presence of white foods is met by the stubborn, uncelebrated existence of barley at the core of indigenous doxa. If children's longing for bread … represent pressure to assimilate, barley products stand for cultural resistance' (1988: 159–60).

With diversification of consumption comes the third element of processual analysis: the tracking of sequences of consumption events among multiple consumers as a politically forceful dialogue. Expenditure, material display, meals and social spending work as statements that respond to and seek to persuade others about their cultural loyalties (Wilk 1994). Not only do meals of barley or bread symbolically resist or support Ecuador's dominant Hispanicised culture. The requirements of accumulating for public consumption – getting the seeds into the earth and the crops from the field or taking up life in raw new concrete block shantytowns – cause people to practise the routines they wish to communicate messages about. The leanness of any occupation open to Andeans means that allegiances projected through goods are hard to earn and harder to fake. Nevertheless, messages are often mixed. Pure indigenous or white cultural forms are hard to find in the eclectic household economies of rural communities. Consumption emerges, then, as a fluid, highly charged and powerfully persuasive medium of social relations.

For all the sharp analysis of inequality and power, this close study of

consumption embedded in community life can falter on two fronts. The first is a return to the parochialism of village studies mired in details of local consumption practices and inventories of small samples of household possessions. As advocated by Miller, studying mass consumption was supposed to liberate anthropology precisely from this narrowness. Second, tracking consumers' novel consumption of commodities amid traditional material culture can strike an overly celebratory note. While it is true that 'one often finds that the goods have been transformed, at least in part, in accordance with the values of the receiving culture' (Howes 1996: 5) the transformation may be rather trivial in the face of the political and economic changes that otherwise erode people's autonomy.

Wilk escapes some of these problems by linking the study of consumption to the study of media (Wilk 1994). He argues that consumption in Belize City is a contentious dialogue about appropriate development models that he terms 'official state', 'internationalist metropolitan', 'ethnic' and 'Creole urban'. Yet rather than focusing simply on the variations among consumer styles, he examines the media, especially television, in order to reconnect style to the power of time. Television programming matters in post-colonial nations like Belize, not simply for the consumer imagery it broadcasts, but for its effect on 'colonial time', the timing of the transfer of new commodities that endowed jet-setting elite consumers with the cachet of being the first to consume the latest metropolitan fashion. By disrupting the fashion hierarchy that consigned the Third-World poor to the end of the line, television enables competing visions of both present stylishness and future realities.

Historical analysis can also rescue processual approaches from its parochialism. In an innovative study of colonial culture and power, Thomas (1991) links the local uses of goods by both Pacific Islanders and Europeans to the wider give and take of political strategies. He tracks the acquisition of foreign objects, everything from rifles that get inlaid with shells to stone adzes that become carefully painted into European portraits, as an unfolding discourse of power and identity. Extending analysis over two centuries, Thomas recalls Mauss by reconnecting problems of gift giving and reciprocity to the use and display of goods. He intends to subvert anthropologists' taken-for-granted ideas about gifts, yet by once again offering a holistic context that cross-cuts theoretical boundaries between exchange, use, display and consumption of goods, Thomas calls to mind the fullness of materialised social lives that Mauss explored. Thomas illustrates the ways material culture interconnects coloniser and colonised political strategy, economic effort and cultural values, forming dense (if not total) social facts.

Recently, after offering several thoughtful pieces on consumption, the anthropologist Jonathan Friedman declared that 'no theory of consumption is feasible because consumption is not a socially autonomous phenomenon'

(Friedman 1994b: 17). His comment reflects anthropology's long-standing concern to shift attention from individual consumer to the social world made possible through the use of goods. However, his dismissal misses its mark. Precisely this concern with the social and cultural dimensions of consumption has helped to make consumption an important focus of anthropological theorising. Much of this theory elaborates on a few basic concerns. Most anthropologists agree that consuming does fundamental work in stabilising cultural categories and consequently consumer motivation relates to basic culture-making habits of people as members of communities. Additionally, the exchange of goods or withholding them from exchange, matters of alienability and inalienability, are rooted in the political ordering of society; apparently individualised habits of purchasing, giving and possessing are key arenas where authority is naturalised or challenged. Oriented by these ideas, the economic anthropology of consumption has developed along the several lines of analysis covered in this review. As researchers expand their ambitions, to new social classes, new products and new intersections between consumption and media, anthropology will not only keep up with 'the unsentimental march of history towards mass consumption' (Miller 1995b: 268) but help account for the inequalities, variations and creativity this march produces.

Note

1. Preparation of this article was aided by Rhiannon Jones and her research into recent consumption theory. I am grateful to her for sharing her work with me.

References

Appadurai, A. (ed.) 1986. *The social life of things: commodities in cultural perspective*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Barthes, R. 1972. *Mythologies*. New York: Noonday Press.

Baudrillard, J. 1981. *For a critique of the political economy of the sign*. St. Louis: Telos Press.

Baudrillard, J. 1983. *Simulations*. New York: Semiotext(e).

Boas, F. 1899. Summary of the work of the committee in British Colombia. In *Report of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, 1898*. London: J. Murray.

Bourdieu, P. 1984. *Distinction*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Bourdieu, P. 1998. *Practical reason*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Bracken, C. 1997. *The potlatch papers: a colonial case history*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Campbell, C. 1995. The sociology of consumption. In *Acknowledging consumption* (ed.) D. Miller. London: Routledge.

Carrier, J. 1990. The symbolism of possession in commodity advertising. *Man* (n.s.) 25: 693–706.

Carrier, J. 1994. Alienating objects: the emergence of alienation in retail trade. *Man* (n.s.) 29: 359–80.

Carrier, J. and J. McC. Heyman 1997. Consumption and political economy. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 3: 355–73.

Chin, E. 1999. Ethnically correct dolls: toying with the race industry. *American Anthropologist* 101: 305–21.

Chin, E. 2001. *Purchasing power: black kids and consumer culture*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Clarke, A. 1999. *Tupperware: the promise of plastic in 1950s America*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian University Press.

Comaroff, J. 1997. The empire's old clothes: fashioning the colonial subject. In *Situated lives: gender and culture in everyday life* (eds) L. Lamphere, H. Ragone and P. Zavella. New York: Routledge.
Conklin, B.A 1997. Body paint, feathers, and VCRs: aesthetics and authenticity in Amazonian activism. *American Ethnologist* 24: 711–37.
Douglas, M. 1966. *Purity and danger: an analysis of the concepts of pollution and taboo*. New York: Praeger.
Douglas, M. and B. Isherwood 1979. *The world of goods*. New York: Basic Books.
Flannery, K.V. 1968. Archaeological systems theory and early Mesoamerica. In *Anthropological archaeology of the Americas* (ed.) B. Meggars. Washington, DC: Anthropological Society of Washington.
Friedman, J. (ed.) 1994a. *Consumption and identity*. Chur: Harwood Academic.
Friedman, J. 1994b. Introduction. In *Consumption and identity* (ed.) J. Friedman. Chur: Harwood Academic.
Harris, M. 1966. The cultural ecology of India's sacred cattle. *Current Anthropology* 7: 51–9.
Harris, M. 1977. *Cannibals and kings: the origins of cultures*. New York: Random House.
Harris, M. 1989. *Our kind: who we are, where we came from, and where we are going*. New York: Harper Perennial.
Herskovits, M.J. 1948. *Man and his works: the science of cultural anthropology*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
Howes, D. 1996. Introduction: commodities and cultural borders. In *Cross-cultural consumption: global markets, local realities* (ed.) D. Howes. New York: Routledge.
Latour, B. 1999. *Pandora's hope: essays on the reality of science studies*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
Lee, R. and I. De Vore (eds) 1968. *Man the hunter*. Chicago: Aldine.
Lofgren, O. 1994. Consuming interests. In *Consumption and identity* (ed.) J. Friedman. Chur: Harwood Academic.
Mauss, M. 1990. *The gift: the form and reason for exchange in archaic societies*. New York: W.W. Norton.
McCracken, G. 1988. *Culture and consumption*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
Miller, D. 1987. *Material culture and mass consumption*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
Miller, D. (ed.) 1995a. *Acknowledging consumption*. London: Routledge.
Miller, D. 1995b. Consumption studies as the transformation of anthropology. In *Acknowledging consumption* (ed.) D. Miller. London: Routledge.
Miller, D. 1998a. Coca-Cola: a black sweet drink from Trinidad. In *Material cultures: why some things matter* (ed.) D. Miller. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Miller, D. 1998b. *A theory of shopping*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
Mintz, S.W. 1985. *Sweetness and power: the place of sugar in modern history*. New York: Penguin.
Orlove, B.S. and H.J. Rutz 1989. Thinking about consumption: a social economy approach. In *The social economy of consumption* (ed.) H.J. Rutz and B.S. Orlove. Lanham, Md.: University Press of America.
Philibert, J.-M. and C. Jourdan 1996. Perishable goods: modes of consumption in the Pacific Islands. In *Cross-cultural consumption: global markets, local realities* (ed.) D. Howes. New York: Routledge.
Rappaport, R.A. 1984 (1968). *Pigs for the ancestors: ritual in the ecology of a New Guinea people*. (Enlarged ed.) New Haven: Yale University Press.
Safina, C. 1997. *Song for the ocean blue*. New York: Henry Holt.
Stern, R., T. Dietz, V. Rutan, R. Socolow and J. Sweeney (eds) 1997. *Environmentally significant consumption*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
Thomas, N. 1991. *Entangled objects: exchange, material culture and colonialism in the Pacific*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
Tranberg-Hansen, K. 2000. *Salaula: the world of secondhand clothing and Zambia*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Veblen, T. 1994 (1899). *The theory of the leisure class*. New York: Penguin.

Weismantel, M. 1988. *Food, gender, and poverty in the Ecuadorian Andes*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
Weismantel, M. 1997. Review of *Consumption and identity*, edited by J. Friedman. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 3: 380–81.
Weiss, B. 1996. *The making and unmaking of the Haya lived world*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
Wilk, R. 1994. Consumer goods as a dialogue about development: colonial time and television time in Belize. In *Consumption and identity* (ed.) J. Friedman. Chur: Harwood Academic.
Wolf, E.R. 1999. *Envisioning power: ideologies of dominance and crisis*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

PART III

CIRCULATION

Introduction

From the beginnings of the sub-discipline, economic anthropology has been concerned with circulation, and arguably this is the topic through which sub-disciplinary work has had the most notable impact on anthropology generally and on those from other disciplines. Circulation is also the topic where what economic anthropologists have to say touches most directly on popular economic thought, especially the idea of the market. The chapters in Part III cover the classic forms of circulation that have interested those in the sub-discipline, ranging from formal ceremonial exchange to monetised markets. The final chapter is a consideration of circulation of a special sort, one that exists in the absence of exchange. This chapter is a sketch of a topic that has, thus far, attracted relatively little attention. However, it is a rewarding one because, however quietly, it raises questions about what seems to be a common assumption, that circulation requires the exchange of value.

14 Ceremonial exchange

Andrew Strathern and Pamela J. Stewart

Ceremonial exchange is a term that anthropologists have applied to systems in which items of value are publicly displayed and given to partners on a reciprocal basis over time. Typically, these occasions are marked by dancing and festivities, where men, women and children participate in one way or another. This involvement of the community demonstrates the social importance of the complex events involved. These events also create and maintain forms of political alliance between the partners, whether these are particular persons or groups.

Ceremonial exchange therefore becomes an important constitutive factor in the political order of society. Further elements may be added to those we have specified here. For example, the exchanges may take place along lines of intermarriage between sets of kin. They may also spring from compensation payments for deaths that have occurred through inter-group fighting or individual conflicts. Social features of this sort can be added to or subtracted from the basic model, which specifies that ceremonial exchange consists of reciprocal relationships over time that are marked by public transfers of wealth items between partners. In a broad sense, we can also say that the term 'ceremonial' refers to the formalised and customary practices of display and communication that take place on these occasions. Owing to the value accorded these practices, we can say that the exchanges form ritual sequences.

Finally, it is important to realise that often the exchanges take place in terms of delayed reciprocity. Rather than the two sides immediately exchanging wealth items, more often one side or partner gives, thereby obligating the recipients to make a return on a subsequent occasion. It is this element of delay that marks the trust or obligation between the sides: if the obligations are not met, relationships can become strained or even hostile. In other instances there may be instant reciprocity, but usually this also is set into an ongoing incremental sequence spread out over time. The main point here is that delayed exchanges of wealth maintain relationships. An understanding of these processes can help one to appreciate the social interactions of the people involved in the events.

The feature of delayed reciprocity also underlies the basic anthropological definition of the 'gift'. As with many terms used in anthropology, this has a number of different components of meaning derived from vernacular or non-technical usages. These, however, may not apply well in the anthropological

context. The primary vernacular meaning of a gift is that it is freely given for no return: 'something that is voluntarily transferred by one person to another without compensation', as Webster's *Third new international dictionary* puts it, *sub verbo*. Bronislaw Malinowski, the Polish anthropologist whose work with the Trobriand Islanders of Papua in the Pacific region from 1914 to 1918 demonstrated the importance of an inter-island network of ceremonial exchange of valuables, known as the *kula* system, was particularly concerned in this study to show that the category of the 'pure gift', corresponding exactly to this definition, rarely if ever occurred among these people. Instead, all gifts were to be seen in terms of appropriate expected returns.

The *kula*, for example, was based on the delayed exchange between partners of especially decorated armshells for necklaces (Malinowski 1984 [1922]). The giving of an item, or a series of items, was explicitly designed to obligate a partner to make an appropriate return later. Thus, gifts bound people together, and in doing so helped to create the fabric of society on an interpersonal basis. These two observations on the *kula* are also applicable to other domains of exchange among the Trobrianders and they negate the two terms of the Webster definition of the gift.

Trobriand gifts create and derive from obligation, and the obligation involved is to make subsequent returns. The anthropological definition of the gift rests on Malinowski's findings among the Trobrianders and on the further cross-cultural systematisation of findings made by the French sociologist Marcel Mauss in his *Essai sur le Don* (*The gift*), first published in 1925. Mauss used ethnographic reports from Polynesia, North America, ancient Europe and Melanesia (the geographic region to which the Trobrianders are conventionally assigned), in order to find shared principles relating to the gift as a major constitutive principle of certain societies. Malinowski used the Trobriands example to combat a view he attributed to economists at the time. He wrote against the notion of 'the Primitive Economic Man … an imaginary, primitive man, or savage, prompted in all his actions by a rationalistic conception of self-interest, and achieving his aims directly and with the minimum of effort,' thus being motivated 'by pure economic motives of enlightened self-interest' (Malinowski 1984 [1922]: 60).

Malinowski pointed out how men's work in gardening, concentrated on the growing of yams for the purpose of using these in a complex series of gifts and counter-gifts between relatives linked by marriage (that is, affines, in-laws), was in turn geared into the operations of the leadership system of chiefship and into *kula* exchanges. He sought to show how the Trobrianders were 'prompted by motives of a highly complex, social and traditional nature' (1984 [1922]: 60). Essentially the same message was taken up by the school of economic anthropologists who were known as 'substantivists'. This school was associated with the name of Karl Polanyi (see Isaac chap. 1 supra; Polanyi

1957). These economists saw the economy in terms of institutional processes through which people maintained social relations and upheld group-specific cultural values. Essentially the same viewpoint was argued forcibly by Marshall Sahlins (1976). As Malinowski had earlier done, Sahlins took his stand against narrow utilitarian definitions of people's desires and needs.

These trends in analysis, begun by Malinowski, received powerful early support from the work of Mauss, as we have noted. Mauss linked the ideology of obligatory reciprocity in gift giving, which is the basis for ceremonial exchange, to an ethic of honour by which prestige is either gained or lost between partners. He identified separately the obligations to give, to receive and to repay. One of his cases, from outside of the Pacific, was from the northwest coast of America among the Kwakiutl people. Kwakiutl feasting was called potlatching. Chiefs, with the support of their followers, were the primary participants in it. Success in amassing and giving away objects of wealth and food brought prestige and indicated that the chief was 'favourably regarded by the spirits' and so possessed fortune (Mauss 1954 [1925]: 37). Recipients also could not refuse a gift, for fear of being shamed. And in turn they would have to make a later return, preferably greater than they had received. The potlatch thus had an inherent tendency to escalation. Mauss pointed out that one intention of the giver could be to humiliate the receiver, and this he saw as diagnostic of an agonistic or competitive element. This element is also found to a variable degree in the ceremonial exchange systems of the Pacific region, for example among the Mount Hagen people of the Western Highlands Province of Papua New Guinea (Strathern 1971; Strathern and Stewart 2000); and on Goodenough Island in Milne Bay Province (Young 1971).

Mauss (1954 [1925]: 45) introduced a further analytical term into his discussion. He called obligatory gifts 'prestations', and he called those prestations which involved whole groups or families with one another 'total prestations'. This term 'total' comes to be applied because prestations carry with them many aspects and functions: religious, economic and political, for example. They are embedded in a system of overall circulation: 'The circulation of goods follows that of men, women, and children, of festival ritual, ceremonies, and dances, jokes, and injuries' (1954 [1925]: 44). Further, in giving things, 'a man gives himself, and he does so because he owes himself – himself and his possessions – to others' (1954 [1925]: 45). These various insights and propositions of Mauss were very influential in feeding into subsequent ethnographic analyses, especially of Pacific societies. Mauss's synoptic formulations of this kind have been widely admired and adopted, although Annette Weiner (1992) introduced an important caveat: some items of value may not enter readily into transactions, but belong rather to a sphere of identity, family continuity or group reproduction through rituals. This she

called the sphere of 'inalienable possessions', a concept that Maurice Godelier (1996) has also subsequently employed and adapted.

Mauss's scheme was evolutionary. He saw the gift as emblematic of archaic economies or forms of exchange generally. He also saw the origins of credit and the contractual relationship found in modern law to be rooted in this archaic context. And he saw a phase of what he called gift exchange, in which individual persons made specific partnerships with one another, to be characteristic of societies that had passed from total prestations but had 'not yet reached the stage of pure individual contract, the money market, sale proper, fixed price, and weighted and coined money' (1954 [1925]: 45). He returns to this scheme of thought at the end of his study (1954 [1925]: 76–81), stressing the significance of the gift for making peace and alliances between people as an alternative to war, and implying that modern nations might have something to learn from tribal experience of this sort (1954 [1925]: 80).

The evolutionary and ethical aspects of Mauss's thought have been less followed up than his synoptic analytical schemes and his delineation of the elements involved in gift exchange. It is these elements that are often clearly exhibited in the complexes of activity that we recognise as constituting systems of ceremonial exchange.

Another definitional issue in terms of which the domain of ceremonial exchange has been discussed has been the distinction between trade and gift exchange. This issue is relevant to the starting point of Malinowski's analysis of the *kula* exchanges. On the overseas voyages carried out to solicit and obtain *kula* valuables from their exchange partners, men might take various other items to trade with, and the Trobrianders gave these transactions the name *gimwali*. One explanatory theory of the *kula* system is that gifts provided a political cover or surety for the utilitarian trading that went on between partners from mutually hostile and foreign places. This is not a theory that has gained acceptance, since many anthropologists prefer to see the *kula* in political terms, as a competition for prestige, and also as a ritualised alternative to physical violence or warfare between groups. Nevertheless, the distinction between *kula* and *gimwali* laid the foundation for a standard distinction in Pacific ethnographies between gift exchange and trade. In this distinction trade corresponds closely to 'barter', the category previously favoured by economists as the original or earliest form of economic transaction between people. Malinowski's ethnography, by contrast, highlighted *kula* by comparison with *gimwali*; and Mauss further argued that total prestations, followed by gift exchange, carried within them the evolutionary forerunners of modern economic transactions. Thus, he downplayed the primacy or significance of barter as an economic mode of activity.

It is not necessary to evaluate these viewpoints here. What we can say is

that, if we make an analytical distinction between trade and gift exchange, then we will find both categories at work in empirical cases, and what is of interest is to see how they articulate with, or relate to, each other. Thomas Harding (1970) studied this problem for the Vitiaz Straits area on the north coast of the island of New Guinea. His overall finding was that a wide range of foodstuffs, artefacts and items of value were linked in a trading network between islands and mainland sites through which goods were funnelled back to the island of Siassi, where they entered into feasting and exchange activities that established the prestige of local leaders. This basic model can be found replicated in other areas. Christopher Healey (1990) carried out a detailed study of trade among the Maring people of the Simbai and Jimi Valleys north of Mount Hagen in Papua New Guinea. The Maring environment is rich in birds of paradise and marsupials whose plumes and fur are highly prized as decorations for dancing both by the Maring themselves and, to an even greater degree, by the Chimbu, Wahgi and Hagen peoples living in the densely populated highland valleys and ranges to their south. Maring hunters shot and trapped forest creatures and processed their skins and feathers into items suitable for trade. Through individual trade partnerships these items made their way southwards, while stone axe blades, needed for garden work, and shell valuables, ultimately derived from coastal areas, were drawn northwards into the Maring area. The Central Highlanders (Chimbu, Wahgi and Hagen) gathered large quantities of plumes and furs for their ceremonial displays of personal and group strength and attractiveness on occasions of feasting and gift exchange. Trade thus fed into contexts of exchange on a regional basis between different language areas. Roy Rappaport (1984: 106–9) argued that the inclusion of valuables with trading items such as salt and stone axes assisted in the distribution of goods along the chains of partnerships feeding into and out of the Central Highlands valleys. His argument depended on his supposition that Maring trading links were formed in chains, rather than in webs through which goods might flow in a number of directions. Healey, however, argued in response that these trading chains intersected to form webs, and also that moral pressures could be exerted over several intervening links. He added that 'moral pressure is also strengthened by the fear that failure to comply with a request may leave one open to a witchcraft attack if the unsatisfied trading partner is a witch' (Healey 1990: 214). Healey further suggests (1990: 215) that a hard and fast distinction between utilitarian and non-utilitarian goods cannot be made.

Healey points out, as others have done, that trading activity is itself not empty of social context. While it has a utilitarian aspect, 'trade is not simply a utilitarian pursuit but one that allows individuals to make qualitative statements about social relationships' (1990: 315). These relationships among the Maring, as elsewhere, varied in accordance with social distance. 'Trade

with strangers in pre-contact times [that is, prior to the earliest government patrols by the Australian colonial administration in 1955–56] was often of a formal nature', sometimes mediated through hosts who accepted trading visitors as guests (1990: 325–6). This point about hosts and guests is significant. Without this minimum of friendship, trading outside of one's own area could be risky. In a study largely devoted to the history of gift exchange since early colonial times in Mount Hagen, we also have identified the element of 'friendship' as significant for both trade and gift exchange (Strathern and Stewart 2000: 21–41). The same general term, *monge etemen* (they make friendship), can refer to both trading and gift-exchange contexts in the Melpa language spoken in Hagen. In terms of either analytical definitions or of indigenous concepts it can be difficult to make a clear determination of whether a transaction should be seen as trade or gift exchange (Strathern 1971: 101; on Maring ideas regarding exchange, see also LiPuma 1988).

This point is relevant to a further, and final, definitional issue: the analytical distinction between gifts and commodities. In taking up this issue in the context of a re-study of the category of barter, Humphrey and Hugh-Jones (1992: 9–10) note that barter usually entails forms of sociality because it has to be underpinned by a measure of trust, and rates of exchange for transactions vary greatly with circumstances. Often barter takes place in the same community and is repeated between people over time. From this we can infer again that the distinction between trade and gift exchange is blurred, although typically trade involves the immediate exchange of unlike items and gift exchange involves the delayed exchange of like items (for example, pigs for pigs or shells for shells). Barter may also take place on the peripheries of communities or language areas. Alfred Gell, in the volume edited by Humphrey and Hugh-Jones, argued that more attention should be paid to the contexts of barter in order to counteract the overwhelming tendency in the ethnography of New Guinea, derived from the work of Malinowski and Mauss, to concentrate on gift exchange. A part of Gell's argument was that gift exchange in part mimicked the operation of barter, placing social reproduction in the hands of people who controlled valuables (Gell 1992: 167).

Barter corresponds conventionally to the category of commodity exchange, in which the items exchanged are seen as 'alienable objects' (1992: 144). Gell points out that items are also alienated in gift exchange (1992: 145), so that this definition does not unequivocally distinguish the two categories in practice. If we accept, however, that both trade (= barter, commodity exchange) and gift exchange (= ceremonial exchange) are important components of the overall economy in New Guinea societies, it becomes evident that we cannot describe these societies simply as 'gift-exchange systems', in contrast to the 'commodity-exchange systems' of the industrialised West. The recognition that commodity exchanges were a part, and

often a vital part, of the circulation of items in pre-contact systems further makes it easier to understand why markets and business activity rapidly became adopted following colonial influence in New Guinea. Equally, it is important to understand that the processes of gift exchange and commodity exchange are intertwined in the contemporary economy just as they were in the past. In Mount Hagen, for example, when state money was introduced into the ceremonial exchange nexus, replacing shell valuables, a new articulation of processes was set up. Most money is obtained through earnings from coffee growing, so that money from the sale of coffee was partly channelled into gift exchange. The gift-exchange network thus became dependent ultimately on the world market price for coffee; just as, in the past, the supply of valuables and plumes for exchange occasions depended on the availability and cost of these items from peoples peripheral to the Hageners' own gift-exchange networks.

Commodity exchange and gift exchange thus do not refer to different societal forms. Moreover, in practice the character of an exchange may include both commodity and gift elements. And specific items of value may enter into chains of transactions in which they are treated alternatively as commodities or gifts. Actually, it is the conversion of commodities into gifts that underlies many of the transactions in situations of social and economic change that are found in the contemporary world of the Pacific region. As James Carrier (1992a: 129–38), commenting on the work of C.A. Gregory (1982), has pointed out, this process of conversion has in turn had multiple effects on the practices of gift exchange and the social relationships which are realised through them. On Ponam Island in Manus Province, Papua New Guinea, kinship-based exchanges at village level came to be dependent on monetary contributions by village members who had become urban migrants. External trade alliances atrophied, and the former class of wealthy men (*lapan*), who were prominent in their descent-based kin groups, no longer controlled marriage patterns by sponsoring marital exchanges of wealth. As a result, the descent groups (*kamal*) remained in existence, but did not carry the same functional importance as they had before (1992a: 135). The external capitalist economy did not destroy all the elements of the former social structure but it altered the inter-relationship of these elements.

Similarly, in Mount Hagen, when state money was introduced into gift exchange (*moka*), this favoured groups with fertile and abundant land for growing coffee. It also allowed women, who could earn money by selling vegetables in the urban market, to play a more decisive role in contributing directly to sums of money designated for *moka*. New forms of conflict between men and women, and intensified forms of group conflict over land resources, emerged from this situation of articulation (Carrier's term for this kind of historical process, Carrier 1992a). Perhaps in response to Carrier's

critique, Gregory has himself recently disavowed any idea that he intended to use 'the distinction between gifts and commodities to classify societies', adding 'nor have I ever suggested that "we" are to commodities as "they" are to gifts. Such an approach is anathema to me' (Gregory 1997: 47).[1] Possibly, Gregory may have thought that at some time in the pre-colonial past there were no commodity exchanges, although there was certainly extensive inter-regional trade (Healey 1990; Hughes 1977). Yet, he did recognise in this earlier work that in Papua New Guinea an 'ambiguous' economy had been created, 'where things are now gifts, now commodities, depending on the social context' (1997: 48, quoting 1982: 117). He goes on to analyse this commodity–gift nexus in the Trobriand Islands, basing his analysis on a film for which the anthropologist Annette Weiner was the anthropological consultant (Gregory 1997: 53–6; see Weiner 1988 for a complementary account). He also explains that in his view the gift–commodity distinction is a tool for logical conceptualisation, not ethnographic classification (1997: 47). In other words, it sets up ideal types that may guide us in analysis, but cannot be used for the empirical classification of whole systems. Unfortunately this is exactly how his work was received by some ethnographers of the region, who used it as a 'persuasive fiction' in order to set out differences between the putative 'Melanesian' life-world and the world of Western capitalism (see Carrier 1992b: 16 on this kind of strategy, which he calls 'mirroring').

From this discussion we can see that an analytical distinction between gifts and commodities can be useful, provided we realise that the existing gift-exchange systems that ethnographers describe are historically set into contexts of colonial change, and that pre-colonial bartering patterns indicate the early intertwining of commodity and gift exchange patterns also. Arjun Appadurai, in a broad review of definitional issues, argues that 'the exaggeration and reification of the contrast between gift and commodity in anthropological writing' can be traced in part to 'the tendency to romanticize small-scale societies' and also to 'the proclivity to marginalize and underplay the calculative, impersonal, and self-aggrandizing features of noncapitalist societies' (Appadurai 1986: 11; see Myers 2001 for another set of papers questioning the gift–commodity opposition). A further way to break down artificial separations is to examine the importance of gifts in industrial economies (see, for example, Carrier 1995; Cheal 1988; Miller 2001).

Social forms and historical processes

Part of the enduring appeal of Mauss's synthesising work on the gift lay in its stress on the complex social character of gift exchanges. He pointed out that these transactions may concern 'the whole of society and its institutions' or they might be the concerns of individuals, setting up the equivalent of contracts between them. In either case 'these phenomena are at once legal,

economic, religious, aesthetic, morphological [that is, having to do with the formation of social groups] and so on' (Mauss 1954 [1925]: 76). We would certainly wish to add 'political' to Mauss's list. Correspondingly, it is often the case that an ethic of giving and receiving is pervasive in social relations generally in those societies in which ceremonial exchanges take this 'total' form. In Mount Hagen, for example, the practice of asking people for things is well established, and continues in the contemporary context. People ask each other for bits of tobacco or cigarettes, for food, for small amounts of money on credit or on a loose reciprocal basis. A constant flow of demands accompanies social interactions. Not all demands, however, are acceded to; in other words, there is no absolute obligation to give, and people have well-developed strategies for denying requests. The appropriate excuse is to say that one does not have the thing requested or, if one has it, that it is already promised to someone else. An established device is to keep two tobacco pouches or two money purses, one full and one empty, and to show the empty one to anyone to whom one does not wish to give the tobacco or money. Requests that are met build up debt, and the recipient may eventually repay the amounts given, adding an increment. Small *moka*-style sequences can ensue in this manner.

Within the more formalised realm of ceremonial exchange a number of contexts can be analytically distinguished. First, the exchanges may link groups within a region or across regions. Second, they may coordinate the activities of people within a group. And third, they may express relationships between people in networks of interpersonal kin ties, typically in what anthropologists call life-cycle rituals; that is, payments made between kin as part of ceremonies that recognise marriage, the birth and growth of children, their entry into adulthood, and their eventual death and the disposal of their physical remains along with the transit of their spirit into other realms of being. These different realms of activity may all be implicated in a given large-scale event; or they may be separated out, but still intrinsically linked together in the total pattern of circulation.

The Trobrianders, originally studied by Malinowski and later by Weiner among others, can exemplify this point. We draw here on some materials from Weiner's study, because its details revise or modify Malinowski's findings. The Trobrianders determine group membership in terms of matrilineal descent, reckoned through females up to the ancestral brother–sister pair considered to have founded each *dala* or matrilineal unit. Both Malinowski and Weiner pointed out that, nevertheless, the father's role is very important, and before a child is born the father is expected to build up its body by frequent acts of intercourse with his expecting wife (Weiner 1988: 57). Fathers help to find food for their children, but in particular they are 'responsible for enhancing their children's beauty' (1988: 59). This they do by making gifts of

shell decorations and by making beauty magic (which they may themselves have had to obtain by trade). The father tries to give a kind of red shell necklace that is considered valuable and that is also used to make one of the two kinds of *kula* valuables (*soulava* or *bagi*) (1988: 60). The father may have to obtain such a necklace through *kula* networks. In other words, this internal gift within the family is linked to the external nexus of male prestige in the *kula*. The father must also find earrings, especially for his daughter, which also have to be obtained through external trade (1988: 60). The child's decorations represent the father's attempt to bind the child to him, and all valuables are thought to have a kind of magical power of attraction (1988: 63).

At the other end of the Trobriand life cycle, when a person dies, a complex series of death exchanges sets in between the matrilineal kin of the deceased and their kin on the father's side. If the father is still alive, he is central in the mourning; perhaps more often, it may be his sister or his sister's daughter who takes on important obligations. One of these obligations is to carry around or wear shell decorations and physical relics such as hair or fingernails representing the dead person's vitality. The relics are placed in cowrie shells, which are then 'attached to a long red shell necklace' (Weiner 1988: 41). A man's daughter may also do this for her father. In the case of the death of the chief Uwelasi, Weiner reports that his father's sister's daughter carried around 'the woven basket that served as his purse' (1988: 48), with his decorations, including the 'youthful red necklace' attached to it. When a man becomes a father, he gives such a red necklace to his daughter. When she marries, she will take this off, marking her transition to the married state (1988: 78). When he dies, she and her father's sister's daughter carry around the necklace he himself wore, out of respect for his memory. The object thus enters into a whole cycle of family relations (see Hoskins 1998; Kopytoff 1986).

Other exchanges following death also link life-cycle exchanges ultimately with the *kula* system. The matrilineal kin of a dead person are known as the 'owners', and other kin, such as the husbands of female matrilineage members (= father's kin), are known as the 'workers'. Workers perform funerary services for the owners, demonstrating their goodwill and avoiding any possible charges of having made sorcery against the deceased. The owners reward the workers with yams and betel nuts. In return, the matrilineal kin of each in-married man 'present men's valuables, such as stone axe blades, clay pots, large decorated shells, and sometimes money' (that is, state money) as a kind of compensation for the death (Weiner 1988: 47). The shells and axe blades given are also used in the *kula*. Later again the women of the matrilineage give out large numbers of specially made women's skirts and banana-leaf bundles to the workers for their funeral work. Women obtain large numbers of these items by using their own links through marriage to other kin. This sequence of funeral gifts parallels the gifts in another circuit of exchanges

between in-laws. When a woman marries she goes to live at her husband's place, and at harvest time her own kin bring yams to her. The yams are a kind of capital or currency that can be used to pay for services and valuables, as well as being consumed or contributed to feasts. The woman's kin fill up her husband's specially-built yam house with these valuable tubers. In return again, the husband is expected to give stone axe blades, clay pots, money and occasionally a *kula* shell to his wife's people. Here too, then, the familial exchanges are linked ultimately to the *kula* network.

Another example of linkage between the domestic level and the external political level of exchange activity can be taken from Mount Hagen. Life-cycle payments in Mount Hagen begin with gifts made to the maternal kin of the child by the father's kin. Formal determination of descent in Mount Hagen is patrilineal (although in practice arrangements can be quite flexible), and therefore two separate patrilineages are involved here, the father's and the mother's, just as separate matrilineages are involved in the Trobriand case. When a child is born, the father is supposed to plant a cordyline bush in his land and to build a small fence around it. The child's faeces are notionally thrown into this little enclosure to prevent pigs from eating them. Traditionally, the umbilical cord is also buried at this spot. After some two years the child is weaned, and the father should make a gift of pigs to its mother's kin, the *wakl te kng* (the pig for the child's faeces), produced largely from the mother's milk. The child now begins to eat more of the 'paternal' foods grown on the father's land. The prestation is essentially a return made for the mother's nurturance, and marks the beginnings of the child's adherence to the father's group. Theoretically, it could be a unilateral payment. In practice, it is usually met by a counter-prestation of pigs and pork to the father and his kin. If the two sides wish, they may then build further on this exchange by repeating the sequence with incremental amounts of wealth, turning the life-cycle payments into *moka* exchange. What begins as a familial event is gradually transformed into a political sequence, with more people drawn into it.

Rena Lederman, writing on the Mendi people of the Southern Highlands Province, Papua New Guinea, has used the distinction between interpersonal and inter-group relations in her analysis of gift exchanges. The Mendi themselves recognise this distinction, speaking of interpersonal partnerships as *twem* and inter-group contexts as relations between *sem*, or clans. These two contexts feed into each other (Sillitoe 1979 effectively documents similar processes among the Wola people, north of Mendi). People belong to clans through birth, but they make their own exchange partnerships through marriage ties. Unmarried girls can enter into *twem* before they reach adulthood. Their senior kin within the clan-based community may give them gifts, and when their clan sisters marry they receive pigs. Leading men

explicitly invest in younger women, treating them as daughters and giving them temporary use of headdresses to wear at dances (Lederman 1986: 71). They do this to gain access to *twem* relationships via these young women when they marry. Young women themselves give shells and pigs to their unmarried brothers. These gifts are described as *nopae*, a word that indicates that they reflect a principle of increment in gift giving. One aspect of this is that the gifts are unsolicited. In the context of marriage exchanges, when a man obtains shells or pigs from his wife's relatives, he tries later to give back more than he has received, describing this act as giving 'for the body' of the bride, that is, as an extension of brideprice payments (1986: 78).

As Lederman notes, such a principle of increment is comparable to the principle that underlies *moka* exchanges among the Melpa people of Mount Hagen. The principle is perhaps even more entrenched at the heart of the system in Hagen, where it has historically been expressed in terms of theoretically escalating gifts and counter-gifts between clan groups within which leaders or 'big-men' wielded considerable influence. The aim was to give more than had been received, thereby regenerating the cycle of competitive giving by motivating the recipients to make even greater returns later.

The *moka* is a historical system of exchange, whose beginnings certainly predate the first arrival of colonial explorers from Australia, and Lutheran and Catholic missionaries from Germany and America in the 1930s. The newcomers brought with them considerable stocks of the cowries, bailers, green-snail and especially pearl shells that were highly esteemed by the local people, and they used these to pay for labour and foodstuffs in a way that was unprecedented. Hitherto, work and subsistence were subsumed within kinship-based relationships founded on solidarity and sharing. Shell valuables, by contrast, could be obtained only by trading or through marriage and entry into the *moka* nexus. These restricted channels of entry tended to favour those who were already prominent in the networks of reciprocity. The sudden arrival of a new set of outsiders, seemingly with magical powers and resources, and their disbursement of previously rare forms of shell wealth to anyone who worked for them or brought food in quantities, unleashed a set of processes in which more people entered the *moka*, competition between leaders within clans became more open and intense, and the rivalry between clan groups escalated.

The newcomers included colonial government officers, whose major initial purpose was to put an end to group fighting and institute the rudiments of government control, principally by appointing certain men as their agents (variously called 'boss-boys' or 'headmen') and by breaking up fights and jailing offenders. One of the first projects in each area was to put local people to work building airstrips and vehicular roads. The period of time in

which the Hagen *moka* exchanges underwent a rapid expansion and evolution coincided with the first thirty years or so of Australian administrative influence. The *moka* itself became a potent instrument of self-pacification through the mapping of *moka* sequences onto compensation payments for killings.

The way this worked was as follows. Clans were linked with other clans as allies in warfare, often through a process of pairing, underpinned by marriages between the two linked groups. In any given bout of fighting one group would be the first to be involved and was therefore known as the 'root man of the fighting' (*el pukl wuö*). Its ally would come to help it, and if one of the allies fell in fighting, the allied group was known as the 'dead man' (*kui-wuö*). The root man then owed a compensation payment of pigs and shells to the dead man, and would be highly motivated to meet this obligation. Since the two groups were allies, the relationship might operate in reverse on another occasion. The notion of reciprocal exchanges between the two was thus well established. Further, after a compensation had been made, its recipients could decide to make it the basis for *moka* by making a return for it at a later date, with an increment in the numbers of pigs or shells given. Since pigs were an important and enduring part of these exchanges, the sequence would now be called 'the road of pigs' (*kng nombuklal*). Reciprocity could continue as long as the alliance lasted. The side that had most recently received a prestation could seek to 'invest' numbers of pigs in various directions, in each case hoping to receive more back, and with the sum return on these investments it could then make *moka* to the other side. Chains and networks of dependency between groups and persons thus arose, making the timing of a given *moka* event dependent on other events in a wider field of relations. Hageners referred to this as 'the rope of *moka*' (*moka kan*) (Strathern 1971; Strathern and Stewart 2000). Because of these arrangements, it can be seen that the system depended on both 'finance' and 'home production' of pigs (Strathern 1969). In so far as leaders were able to dominate and channel the flows of wealth, they would increase their prestige and influence. By the same token, they were often implicitly or explicitly in competition with one another. Intra-clan competition was masked on group *moka* occasions by the assertion that the overall aim was to make the 'name' of the group to 'go on high' (*mbi okla ponom*).

In general, commentators on New Guinea exchange systems have come more and more to stress two points that are important for understanding ceremonial exchange more generally. The first is that flows of gifts and flows of commodities are intertwined, especially since the same items may be gifts in one context and commodities in the next. The second is that this entwinement is not new, but dates back beyond colonial times. For the colonial time periods of the Pacific, Nicholas Thomas's work (for example

1991) has prominently delineated the 'entanglement' of objects in networks between colonial agents and indigenous peoples (see also Godelier 1996: 98; Jorgensen 1993; Marksbury 1993; Parry 1989; Parry and Bloch 1989). Thomas has been particularly concerned to explore processes whereby cultural practices become 'reified' over time as expressions of 'custom' (Thomas 1991, 1994). In the case of ceremonial exchange systems, however, what is striking about many of them is how they have lent themselves to new contexts, including national parliamentary contests. In these there is an interplay between threats of violence and promises of support, mediated through gifts, much as was the case in the past. When the balance tips more towards violence the system itself cannot be sustained (for studies of change along these lines see, on the Enga area, Feil 1984, 1987; and on gendered processes of change, Sexton 1986; Strathern 1979; Stewart and Strathern 2002; a survey of broad processes of change is in Sillitoe 2000).

A reason that is often given for the disappearance of ceremonial exchange systems is the breaching of what have been called 'spheres of exchange' (Bohannan 1955; see Isaac chap. 1 supra). This concept refers to a situation in which ceremonial items of value, sometimes known as 'limited-purpose money', are not freely inter-convertible but flow in restricted exchanges. Since all such items can in principle be expressed in terms of state monetary forms once these enter into the circuits of exchange, systems built on spheres of this sort tend to experience radical change when this happens. Robbins and Akin (1999: 8–9) point out that such radical change may induce anxiety in transactors. They also note that we have to take into account the social relationship involved, the modality of exchange (that is, gift exchange vs. commodity exchange) and the objects exchanged, in considering how spheres operate or may break down over time. In structured tribal economies there may be valuables that operate across spheres, as was the case in Hagen (Strathern and Stewart 1999) and in Mendi (at least to some extent, Lederman 1986: 85); but certain kinds of transactions are limited to certain social relationships. A classic case is the restriction of barter or trade to relationships external to the clan, with sharing or gift giving the norm inside it (Godelier 1982a, 1982b, 1996). In Hagen, as we have seen, Australian colonial personnel began paying for foodstuffs and labour with valuable shells, thereby altering significantly the total relationship between production and exchange in the society. But, as we have noted, this did not lead to the immediate breakdown of the *moka*, but rather to its historical efflorescence and later to significant and continuous transformations. What the breaching of spheres does seem to do is to introduce new pressures within a configuration of exchange networks. But this is only an example of how historical change is always at work in the ceaseless process of the articulation of economic and political spheres to one another.

Note

1. The passage in his earlier, 1982, book that perhaps led commentators to understand that he did intend such a classification reads 'Things and land assume the commodity form in class-based societies … Things, land, and labour assume the gift form in clan-based societies' (1982: 100).

References

Appadurai, A. 1986. Introduction: commodities and the politics of value. In *The social life of things: commodities in cultural perspective* (ed.) A. Appadurai. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bohannan, P. 1955. Some principles of exchange and investment among the Tiv. *American Anthropologist* 57: 60–70.

Carrier, J.G. 1992a. Approaches to articulation. In *History and tradition in Melanesian anthropology* (ed.) J.G. Carrier. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Carrier, J.G. 1992b. Introduction. In *History and tradition in Melanesian anthropology* (ed.) J.G. Carrier. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Carrier, J.G. 1995. *Gifts and commodities: exchange and Western capitalism since 1700*. London: Routledge.

Cheal, D. 1988. *The gift economy*. New York: Routledge.

Feil, D.K. 1984. *Ways of exchange. The Enga Tee of Papua New Guinea*. St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press.

Feil, D.K. 1987. *The evolution of Highland Papua New Guinea*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gell, A. 1992. Inter-tribal commodity barter and reproductive gift-exchange in Old Melanesia. In *Barter, exchange, and value* (eds) C. Humphrey and S. Hugh-Jones. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Godelier, M. 1982a. Social hierarchies among the Baruya of New Guinea. In *Inequality of New Guinea Highlands societies* (ed.) A.J. Strathern. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Godelier, M. 1982b. *La Production des grands hommes. Pouvoir et domination masculine chez les Baruya de Nouvelle Guinée*. Paris: Fayard. (Published in English as *The making of great men: male domination and power among the New Guinea Baruya*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.)

Godelier, M. 1996. *L'Énigme du don*. Paris: Fayard. (Published in English as *The enigma of the gift*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998.)

Gregory, C.A. 1982. *Gifts and commodities*. New York: Academic Press.

Gregory, C.A. 1997. *Savage money: the anthropology and politics of commodity exchange*. Amsterdam: Harwood Academic.

Harding, T.G. 1970. *Voyagers of the Vitiaz Strait*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Healey, C.J. 1990. *Maring hunters and traders: production and exchange in the Papua New Guinea Highlands*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hoskins, J. 1998. *Biographical objects. How things tell the stories of people's lives*. New York: Routledge.

Hughes, I. 1977. *New Guinea Stone Age trade*. (Terra Australis 3.) Canberra: Department of Prehistory, Australian National University.

Humphrey, C. and S. Hugh-Jones (eds) 1992. *Barter, exchange, and value: an anthropological approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jorgensen, D. 1993. Money and marriage in Telefolmin: from sister exchange to daughter as trade store. In *The business of marriage* (ed.) R.A. Marksbury. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Kopytoff, I. 1986. The cultural biography of things: commoditization as process. In *The social life of things: commodities in cultural perspective* (ed.) A. Appadurai. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lederman, R. 1986. *What gifts engender: social relations and politics in Mendi, Highlands Papua New Guinea*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

LiPuma, E. 1988. *The gift of kinship*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Malinowski, B. 1984 (1922). *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press.
Marksbury, R.A. 1993. Introduction: marriage in transition in Oceania. In *The business of marriage* (ed.) R.A. Marksbury. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
Mauss, M. 1954 (1925). *The gift*. New York: W.W. Norton.
Miller, D. 2001. *The dialectics of shopping*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Myers, F.R. (ed.) 2001. *The empire of things: regimes of value and material culture*. Santa Fe: SAR Press.
Parry, J. 1989. On the moral perils of exchange. In *Money and the morality of exchange* (eds) J. Parry and M. Bloch. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Parry, J. and M. Bloch 1989. Introduction. In *Money and the morality of exchange* (eds) J. Parry and M. Bloch. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Polanyi, K. 1957. The economy as institutional process. In *Trade and market in the early empires* (eds) K. Polanyi, C. Arensberg and H. Pearson. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press.
Rappaport, R. 1984 (1968). *Pigs for the ancestors: ritual in the ecology of a New Guinea people*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
Robbins, J. and D. Akin 1999. An introduction to Melanesian currencies: agency, identity, and social reproduction. In *Money and modernity: state and local currencies in Melanesia* (eds) D. Akin and J. Robbins. (ASAO Monograph 17.) Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
Sahlins, M. 1976. *Culture and practical reason*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Sexton, L. 1986. *Mothers of money, daughters of coffee*. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press.
Sillitoe, P. 1979. *Give and take: exchange in Wola society*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
Sillitoe, P. 2000. *Social change in Melanesia: development and history*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Stewart, P.J. and A. Strathern 2002. *Gender, song, and sensibility*: Westport, Conn.: Praeger.
Strathern, A. 1969. Finance and production: two strategies in New Guinea Highlands exchange systems. *Oceania* 40: 42–67.
Strathern, A. 1971. *The rope of moka: big-men and ceremonial exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Strathern, A. 1979. Gender, ideology, and money in Mount Hagen. *Man* (n.s.) 14: 530–48.
Strathern, A. and P.J. Stewart 1999. Objects, relationships, and meanings: historical switches in currencies in Mount Hagen, Papua New Guinea. In *Money and modernity: state and local currencies in Melanesia* (eds) D. Akin and J. Robbins. (ASAO Monograph 17.) Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
Strathern, A. and P.J. Stewart 2000. *Arrow talk. Transaction, transition and contradiction in New Guinea Highlands history*. Kent, OH: Kent State University.
Thomas, N. 1991. *Entangled objects: exchange, material culture, and colonialism in the Pacific*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
Thomas, N. 1994. *Colonialism's culture*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Weiner, A.B. 1988. *The Trobrianders of Papua New Guinea*. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt College Publishers.
Weiner, A.B. 1992. *Inalienable possessions: the paradox of keeping while giving*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Young, M. 1971. *Fighting with food*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

15 The gift and gift economy

Yunxiang Yan

Gift giving constitutes one of the most important modes of social exchange in human societies. The give-and-take of gifts in everyday life creates, maintains and strengthens various social bonds – be they cooperative, competitive or antagonistic – which in turn define the identities of persons. A scrutiny of the gift and the gift economy, therefore, may provide us with an effective and unique means of understanding the formation of personhood and the structure of social relations in a given society.

It is almost impossible to establish a universal typology of gift activities because the world of gifts is both complex and diverse. Given that some gifts are offered in ritualised occasions while others are not, a basic distinction can be made between ceremonial and non-ceremonial gifts. The most common examples of the former include gift activities in rites of passage and holidays, such as weddings, funerals and Christmas, while an occasional gift offered to a helper to express gratitude or some regular exchange of presents among family members or friends may be considered as non-ceremonial gifts. Ceremonial giving can be extremely elaborate and constitutes an important social event in its own right, such as the famous *kula* ring in Trobriand society or the potlatch among the northwest native Americans (see Strathern and Stewart chap. 14 supra). Although highly institutionalised and ritualised, ceremonial gift giving is by no means static; instead, it may evolve rapidly in response to social and market changes. A good example in this connection is Christmas giving, which has developed from a moderate and familial activity in Euro-American societies to an elaborate institution of gift exchange across kinship and class boundaries that, as part of the globalisation process, has shown a tendency of becoming a global phenomenon by the end of the twentieth century (see Miller 1993; Waits 1993).

Another way to classify gift activities is to look at the agency of social actors: do two persons exchange gifts on behalf of the respective groups that they belong to, such as family, lineage or village community? Or, is the gift exchanged between two autonomous individuals? The custom of bridewealth is a good example of collectivist giving and, by contrast, most gift activities in contemporary Western societies occur between two autonomous individuals.

Bridewealth commonly refers to the property transferred from the groom's family or kin group to that of the bride; it serves to validate a marriage agreement and the transfer of the rights over women from one family to

another and is often used by senior men to establish future marriages for the male siblings of the bride. The material content of bridewealth varies from one society to another, but usually it requires items that are most valued locally. In much of Africa, the traditional measure of bridewealth has been cattle in a fixed number, and it often takes the collective effort of an extended family or kin group to provide the required amount of valuables. In a classic description of the Nuer in East Africa, Sir Edward Evans-Pritchard (1940) showed that the standard amount of bridewealth is forty head of cattle. The groom's kinsmen sent these animals to the bride's family in several instalments; then the bride's father was obligated to distribute these cattle among the relatives of his side and the bride's mother's side, while retaining the largest share for himself. Because the bridewealth comes from and goes to a host of families on both sides, the giver and recipient represent two collectivities, and the gift process helps to establish affinal alliances between two kin groups. Consequently, the divorce of a couple will also have far-reaching implications on these two kin groups.

In general, most collective gift-giving activities are institutionalised and ceremonial because collective identities and group interest are at stake, while most individualistic gifts occur in non-ceremonial occasions. But there are exceptions. The exchange of *kula* valuables is an institutionalised ceremonial activity but remains as a highly competitive enterprise wherein individuals act as free agents. On the other hand, the offer of an engagement ring in contemporary Western societies is a highly ritualised and institutionalised act of individual giving.

Looking at the context of social relations, we can see a distinction between horizontal and vertical gift exchange. Horizontal exchange occurs among social equals while vertical exchange cuts across the boundaries of social status; but the two types of gift activities may co-exist on some occasions. Taking the Christmas gift giving as an example, the horizontal exchange of gifts among friends, classmates and co-workers goes on together with the vertical exchange of gifts between employers and employees, patrons and clients, hosts and service providers and, to a lesser degree, between senior and junior generations in a family or kin group. Given the implications of inequality and hierarchy that are inherent to most cases of vertical gift giving, a unilateral and downward flow of gifts often plays an important role in the formation of political authority and power, such as in the cases of the Melanesian big-man and the Polynesian chief (Sahlins 1972; see Strathern and Stewart chap. 14 supra).

Gender is another important dimension in the world of gifts. Many earlier studies of gift giving in non-Western societies seem to be gender-blind because they tended to focus on institutions of ceremonial exchanges in public life where women were thought to play only a trivial role. Annette Weiner's

study of the Trobriand Islands represents one of the first significant breakthroughs, for she argues that women there are by no means the object of gift exchange among men; on the contrary, women play an autonomous and crucial role in certain ceremonial, public exchanges, such as the mortuary exchanges in which women distribute women's wealth, banana-leaf bundles and skirts, to both female and male funeral guests. By so doing, women reclaim their unique role in the matrilineage and restate matrilineal solidarity (Weiner 1976, 1992; see also M. Strathern 1988). It is interesting that, while scrutinising the circulation of *kula* valuables among competitive males in Trobriand Island, Bronislaw Malinowski did not notice the equally important and elaborate exchange of women's wealth which takes place in the public sphere as well, though he carried out his fieldwork some sixty years before Weiner. In contemporary Western societies, women not only give more gifts but also receive more than their male counterparts (Caplow 1984; Cheal 1988), and giving is regarded as an essential part of a feminised ideology of love (Cheal 1987). How to assess women's dominant role in gift giving, however, remains a debatable issue. As Aafke Komter (1996: 120) notes:

> Gift giving by women is embedded in a network of social expectations, norms and rules regarding their societal rights and duties and their position within the family. This embeddedness of feminine generosity in persistent patterns of social inequality between genders suggests that women, gifts and power are somehow related to each other.

The economic implications of giving are enormously far-reaching in developed countries as well as in small-scale and pre-industrial societies. Malinowski has long argued that the motive that drove Trobriand Islanders cannot be explained in terms of materialistic self-interest. Instead, they produce extra yams so that the harvest may be given to exchange partners, chiefs, and eventually rot in storehouses for the sake of earning prestige. Similarly, they actively participate in the inter-island *kula* exchange primarily to obtain the armshells and necklaces that are renowned but have no practical value (Malinowski 1984 [1922]; Weiner 1992). The exchange of *kula* valuables therefore constitutes the very foundation of such prestige economy in Trobriand society. The cattle complex in Africa is similar, for the production and exchange of cattle are mostly for social, political and ritual purposes, and people have an exaggerated and emotional personal attachment to their animals (Evans-Pritchard 1940). Gift exchange may be seen as a different type of economy even in the narrowest sense of the term: Christmas gifts account for several billion dollars worth of business in contemporary American society (Waits 1993) and the villagers in north China spent nearly 20 per cent of their annual income on gift giving (Yan 1996).

Although not the first to examine the world of gifts, Marcel Mauss laid out

the theoretical foundation for the anthropology of the gift when he published *The gift* in 1925. He notes that gift exchange is characterised by the obligations of giving, receiving and returning. Chief among the three obligations is that of the returning; hence the primary question: 'What force is there in the thing given which compels the recipient to make a return?' (Mauss 1967 [1925]: 1). Mauss finds his answer in the Maori concept of *hau*, a mystic power that lies in the forest and in the valuables (*taonga*) given by one person to another. The *hau* always wishes to return to its place of origin, but can only do so through the medium of an object given in exchange for the original gift. Failure to return a gift, therefore, can result in serious trouble, including the death of the recipient. It is the *hau* in the gift, Mauss asserts, that forces the recipient to make a return, and he calls this 'the spirit of the gift' (1967 [1925]: 8–9). As a result,

> one gives away what is in reality a part of one's nature and substance, while to receive something is to receive a part of someone's spiritual essence. To keep this thing is dangerous, not only because it is illicit to do so, but also because it comes morally, physically and spiritually from a person. (1967 [1925]: 10)

The bonds created by gifts are thus the mutually-dependent ties between persons. Here we can see that the fundamental issue in Mauss's analysis of the gift is to determine how people relate to things and, through things, relate to each other. As Liep (1990: 165) notes, both Karl Marx and Mauss were concerned with the alienation of people from the products of their labour, which increases with the development of capitalist economy. But unlike Marx, who focused on the system of commodity exchange in modern societies and discovers the secret of surplus value (1976 [1867]), Mauss concentrated on gift exchange in 'primitive' societies and seeks answers from indigenous belief systems. To compare the primitive, personal gift economy with the modern, impersonal system of commodity exchange, Mauss lays out a three-stage, evolutionary scheme. Social exchange begins with 'total prestations', in which the materials transferred between groups are only part of a larger range of non-economic transfers. The second stage is gift exchange between moral persons who represent groups. The final stage is commodity exchange between independent individuals in market societies (see Mauss 1967 [1925]: 68–9).

The reciprocal obligation in gift exchange, the spirit of the gift, the opposition between gifts and commodities and the relationship between the person and things are the four themes in Mauss's work and they continue to be of central interest to contemporary anthropologists. In fact, it is not an exaggeration to say that economic anthropology itself, as a distinct sub-field, has emerged from a long series of debates regarding the nature of the gift in various societies.

The principle of reciprocity

The anthropology of the gift was long dominated by the issue of the principle of reciprocity, which first emerged as a critique of the Maussian notion of the spirit of the gift. Prior to the appearance of Mauss's classic, Malinowski had published his famous ethnographic account of *kula* exchange in Melanesian society and had described in detail the local system of transactions, ranging from the 'pure gift' to 'real barter' (1984 [1922]). Rejecting Mauss's interpretation of the spirit of the gift, Malinowski retracted his category of the 'pure gift' in a later book (1962 [1926]) and articulated the principle of reciprocity to explain the local system of economic transactions. He argued that the binding force of economic obligations lies in the sanction which either side may invoke to sever the bonds of reciprocity. One gives because of the expectation of return and one returns because of the threat that one's partner may stop giving. All rights and obligations are 'arranged into well-balanced chains of reciprocal services' (Malinowski 1962 [1926]: 46). He thus concluded that the principle of reciprocity was the foundation of Melanesian social order (1962 [1926]: chaps 3, 4, 8, 9). In a similar vein, Fortes (1949) emphasised the political function of exchange and reciprocity, especially the formal exchange of gifts between affines, in maintaining social equilibrium between potentially conflicting sectors in Tallensi society in Africa.

Inspired by Malinowski's work, Raymond Firth argued that the concept of reciprocity (locally called *utu*) is a fundamental drive to action among the Maori in New Zealand. The Maori attach great importance to the notion of 'compensation' or 'equivalent return' (Firth 1959: 412ff.). Firth also offers the most detailed and influential criticism of Mauss's treatment of the Maori notion of *hau*. According to Firth, Mauss misinterprets the *hau* by imputing active qualities to it, which Maori people do not recognise; he also confuses the *hau* of the gift with the *hau* of the giver; and finally, he neglects the third party in a given transaction, which is crucial to comprehend the original meaning of the *hau* (see Firth 1959: 419–20; MacCormack 1982: 287).

Mauss's rendering of the *hau* was challenged further by Marshall Sahlins. He criticised Mauss's preoccupation with the spiritual significance of the *hau* and his neglect of its economic significance. 'The meaning of hau one disengages from the exchange of *taonga* is as secular as the exchange itself. If the second gift is the hau of the first, then the hau of a good is its yield, just as the hau of a forest is its productiveness' (Sahlins 1972: 160). He identified three variables as critical to determining the general nature of gifts and exchange: kinship distance, sociability and generosity. To demonstrate the universality of reciprocity, Sahlins (1972: 191–210) also introduced a tripartite division of exchange phenomena: generalised reciprocity, balanced reciprocity, negative reciprocity.

Because of the reciprocal obligations in the game of gift exchange, the donor may gain prestige and power by transforming the recipient into a debtor; hence the creation of an unequal relationship until a return gift is made. In situations where unbalanced transactions occur, gifts usually pass downward in the social hierarchy because giving is prestigious. The superiority of the giver is believed to be common to gift systems all over the world (Gregory 1982: 47), although the political implications of this superiority varies from actual control over the recipient to the mere prestige of the giver (see A. Strathern 1971: 10). The potlatch among northwest native Americans is often used to illustrate the prestige and power of exaggerated generosity and wealth display by competing chiefs. However, as the aim is to crush a rival chief with excessive obligations that cannot be repaid, the ultimate result of the potlatch, as Maurice Godelier (1999: 58) correctly points out, is to break the chain of reciprocity; hence the self-negation of the principle of reciprocity.

The principle of reciprocity was so frequently employed to generalise about social patterns of gift exchange that it became something of a cliché. As MacCormack (1976: 101) warns: 'the description of all types of exchanges as reciprocal easily leads to an obscuring of the significant differences between them'. It is interesting to note that some aspects of the reciprocity model derived from relatively 'simple' societies, such as the obligation of return and the superiority of the gift giver, do not always fit the social reality of more complex, differentiated societies where there is an advanced division of labour and a significant commercial sector. For example, Lebra (1969) questions the 'equivalent return' in reciprocal relations by examining the repayment of Japanese *on* gifts (benevolent favours from superiors). She demonstrates that, given the hierarchical context of Japanese society, the person who is in a subordinate position can never balance the gift received from a superior. In Chinese society, a particular type of gift, *xiaojing*, flows up the ladder of social status and no equivalent return is expected; the recipients remain socially superior even though they fail to return the gifts (Yan 1996: 147–75). Both the Japanese and the Chinese cases suggest that giving does not always involve reciprocal returns, and unilateral giving does not always generate power for the donor.

Moreover, the core of reciprocity is the notion of equivalent return or balanced exchange, and a possible negative effect of overemphasising balanced exchange is to reduce giving to essentially dyadic transactions between self-interested individuals. In the end, it is still the material aspect of the gift that accounts for everything generated by the exchange: status, prestige, power and, of course, wealth. Yet, there is always something about gifts that cannot be explained in terms of economic rationality, such as the spiritual aspect of the gift.

The spirit of the gift

The Maussian notion of the spirit of the gift was revitalised from two directions during the 1980s. First, in South Asian studies, several anthropologists explored the Indian notion of giving without expectation of material return. As early as the 1970s, Vatuk and Vatuk (1971: 217) noted the asymmetric gift relationships in the context of the caste hierarchy in which people of low castes were generally not expected to return the *dan* gifts they received from their superiors. Further investigations revealed that these gifts, which are offered by people in the dominant caste to those in lower castes during various secular and religious rituals, serve to transfer dangerous and inauspicious elements – such as illness, death and misfortune – from the donor to the recipient. To accept these gifts is to become the vessel of evil and inauspiciousness, like swallowing poison, and the recipients in the lower castes are required by the caste ideology to receive this type of poisonous gift without making a return gift (Brahman priests also accept *dan* gifts for the benefit of the entire community, but they can digest the evil elements by their internal power; see Parry 1986; Raheja 1988). As a result, the institutionalised flow of poisonous gifts from the dominant caste to subordinate castes is a mode of domination. These gifts constitute a serious challenge to the generalised model of reciprocity, leading Parry (1986) to interpret the absence of reciprocity in the Indian gift of *dan* in terms of the 'evil spirit' of the gift. But by so doing, he actually denies Mauss's original argument that the spirit of the gift elicits a return gift. Reflecting on this, Parry (1986: 463) writes: 'Where we have the "spirit", reciprocity is denied; where there is reciprocity there is not much evidence of "spirit". The two aspects of the model do not hang together'.

One resolution of this contradiction is found in Pacific island societies, where one can see both the spirit and the obligation to return. Rather than accepting Mauss's interpretation of the Maori *hau*, many anthropologists have employed the notion of inalienability to explain the existence of spiritual, non-utilitarian ties between giver and recipient. In a provocative paper, Damon examines the Muyuw *kitoum*, a kind of *kula* valuable that is individually owned. He argues that because the objects in question represent the 'congealed labour' of the individual owner, 'no matter where a *kitoum* is … it can be claimed by its owner' (Damon 1980: 282). All *kula* valuables are brought into the exchange by the labour of specific individuals and, therefore, constitute the inalienable *kitoum* of those individuals (1980: 284). Gregory develops similar views in his analysis of the difference between gift–debt relations and commodity–debt relations. According to Gregory, gift debts involve a transfer of inalienable objects between mutually dependent persons, whereas commodity debts result from the exchange of alienable objects between independent transactors. 'A gift is like a tennis ball with an elastic band

attached to it. The owner of the ball may lose possession of it for a time, but the ball will spring back to its owner if the elastic band is given a jerk' (Gregory 1980: 640). The most intriguing point to arise from this discussion is that the inalienability of certain valuables may explain not only the motivation to return but also the original motivation for participation in competitive systems such as the *kula* (see Damon 1982; Feil 1982; Gregory 1982: 340–45).

The inalienability of the gift is at the core of a new theory of gift exchange advanced by Weiner (1992), who is critical of standard anthropological studies which rely on the principle of reciprocity. She argues that the notion of reciprocity is deeply rooted in Western thought and has been used to justify theories of a free-market economy since Thomas Hobbes (see Weiner 1992: 28–30). Anthropologists have continued in this tradition and take for granted that there is an innate, mystical or natural autonomy in the workings of reciprocity. Weiner (1992: 43) maintains:

> What motivates reciprocity is its reverse – the desire to keep something back from the pressures of give and take. This something is a possession that speaks to and for an individual's or a group's social identity and, in so doing, affirms the difference between one person or group and another. Because the ownership of inalienable possessions establishes difference, ownership attracts other kinds of wealth.

It is this principle of keeping-while-giving, rather than the norm of reciprocity, that can explain the obligation to return a gift, the central issue raised by Mauss (Weiner 1992: 46). Interestingly, Weiner suggests that Mauss is right about the Maori *hau*: 'The hau as a life force embedded in the person is transmitted to the person's possessions' and thus adds inalienable value to the objects (Weiner 1992: 63; see also Thompson 1987). Thus, economic anthropology had come full circle by the 1990s: the spirit of the gift, in the name of inalienability, was back at centre stage.

This theory of the inalienable gift, however, can hardly be applied to gift practices in those complex societies where most gifts are purchased commodities. For example, in China money plays an important role in ceremonial giving, and in non-ritualised occasions most material gifts are consumer goods such as wine, cigarettes and canned food (see Kipnis 1997; Yan 1996). In contrast to the Melanesian and Polynesian cases, which involve the endless circulation of valuable shells, fine mats or cloaks, the commodity-turned-gifts exchanged among the Chinese are rarely recycled as return gifts. Instead, it is expected that gifts will be consumed by the recipient soon after their acceptance.

While it challenges the notion of inalienability, the Chinese case suggests that the spirit of the gift can be understood at two levels. The theory of inalienability elaborated by Weiner, among others, can be seen in the

Melanesian case where the gift is believed to contain *hau* or some other spiritual essence and thus cannot be disposed of freely by the recipient. This is the empirical evidence upon which Mauss bases his argument, but as an empirical observation it may not be true in other societies. However, in broader terms, the point that Mauss and others made from the Melanesian data is that the bond between individuals or groups can be created through the association between persons and things. Therefore, the key issue in any society is to determine what people think about the message conveyed by the gift: love, friendship, caring, obligation or a supernatural spirit. When research is conducted in complex, state societies, the spirit of the gift is better to be understood as the spirit of the donor and the relationship between donor and recipient.

Gifts vs. commodities

Mauss's original distinction between personal gift giving and impersonal commodity exchange has been widely accepted and, until recently, few anthropologists have criticised this basic distinction. Based on Karl Polanyi's (1957) theory of three modes of exchange, Sahlins suggests that the sorts of relations and values that are taken to characterise gift exchange and those that characterise commodity exchange should not be seen as bipolar opposites, but rather as extreme points of a continuum (1972: 191–7). The most important determinant is kinship distance: 'Reciprocity is inclined toward the generalised pole by close kinship, toward the negative extreme in proportion to kinship distance' (1972: 196). In other words, people tend to exchange gifts among kin and commodities among non-kin. As so-called primitive societies are regarded as dominated by kinship, Sahlins's scheme implies that there is a link between the mode of exchange and the mode of production, a proposition developed by Gregory a decade later (1980, 1982). Following Marx's definition of commodities and Mauss's characterisation of gifts, Gregory offers a binary formulation of a gift economy in clan-based societies vs. a commodity economy in class-based societies. He (1982: 41) maintains that commodity exchange establishes objective and quantitative relationships between the objects transacted, while gift exchange establishes a personal and qualitative relationship between the subjects transacting. The real distinction between gifts and commodities, therefore, lies in the different orders of social relations that are constructed and mediated through the exchange of objects.

The sharp contrast between gift exchange and commodity exchange has been questioned by many anthropologists since the 1980s. Damon (1982: 343) points out that although the *kula* ring is not a system of commodity exchange, it does lead to an expansion or accumulation of valuables by individual participants. Morris (1986: 6–7) argues that in state societies such as ancient Greece, gift exchange also functioned as a primary form of exchange both

within and between communities. Several scholars have pointed out that the radical opposition between gifts and commodities is actually a result of the ideological construction of the pure gift in the West and the romanticisation of gift relations in non-Western societies and they suggest that this radical opposition should be abandoned (Appadurai 1986: 11–13; Carrier 1990: 20–25; Parry 1986: 465; Parry and Bloch 1989: 8–12). Based on ethnographic findings reported in their edited volume on money, Parry and Bloch propose a new approach to the difference between gift and commodity. In this view, there are two related but separate transactional orders in most societies, 'on the one hand transactions concerned with the reproduction of the long-term social or cosmic order; on the other, a "sphere" of short-term transactions concerned with the arena of individual competition' (Parry and Bloch 1989: 24).

For those who emphasise the inalienable features of the gift, however, the distinction between gifts and commodities remains essential. Marilyn Strathern insists that gift exchange differs from barter or commodity exchange because the value of the gifts is judged qualitatively, not quantitatively as in the case of commodities. She (1992: 177) points out that Melanesian gift exchange is based on 'the capacity for actors (agents, subjects) to extract or elicit from others items that then become the object of their relationship'. Similarly, Weiner (1992: 191n2) maintains that 'inalienable possessions attain absolute value that is subjectively constituted and distinct from the exchange value of commodities or the abstract value of money'.

Another way to address the issue is to acknowledge that in both traditional pre-market systems and contemporary market systems there are certain sacred objects that can never entirely be alienated from their original owners. It is this inalienable sacred air of certain objects that draws the basic boundary between gift and commodity exchanges. In this respect, Weiner's notion of 'keeping-while-giving' may help us to understand the felt need to distinguish gifts from commodities; but because of the entanglement of gift and commodity exchanges in everyday practice, this notion alone cannot explain the complicated relations between gifts and commodities.

Appropriately, a number of anthropologists have argued that gifts and commodities co-exist in certain circumstances (for example, Carrier 1991; Godelier 1977; Morris 1986; Parry and Bloch 1989). With some qualifications, the interchangeability of gift and commodity is also argued, especially the dual role of money as gift and commodity (Gregory 1980; A. Strathern 1979), and the transformation of commodity into gift through the work of appropriation. The development of gift wrapping serves just such a function, appropriating an impersonal commodity into a personalised gift (Carrier 1995). It is interesting to note that, before 1880, both urban and rural Americans tended to give handmade objects at Christmas and they rarely wrapped them. When handmade gifts were replaced by manufactured items,

however, gift wrapping quickly developed into a norm for Christmas presents, and the new norm in turn led to a new industry of wrapping products (see Waits 1993: 16–28).

Not only do objects pass from commodity to gift (and back again; see Werbner 1990), recent studies of gift exchange in China show that there is a grey area between gift relations and commodity relations. In this grey area a particular type of Chinese gift, an instrumental gift, plays a role in merging these two opposing sets of relations. Instrumental gifts are given in exchange for favours or services, and the recipients in turn repay the donors by exercising their positional power or providing resources which are under their control. As a result, the instrumental gift serves to channel commodity transactions, from purchasing consumer goods to starting private businesses, in a highly personalised way (see Smart 1997; Yan 1996; Yang 1994). Instrumental gift giving is reported in modern Japan (Befu 1968), and efforts to personalise commodity relations can be found in typical commodity societies as well, such as the petty market of stolen goods in London's East End (Mars 1982).

The intriguing point here is that, because of the potential for instrumentality inherent in the gift, it can be used to cultivate personal relations and produce a twofold result. On the one hand, the instrumental gift is transformed into a quasi-commodity, because it is transacted for personal interests and is reciprocated with a similarly instrumental return (goods, favour, service and so on). On the other hand, the instrumental exchange relations facilitated by these gifts in turn become personal to some extent, and further commodity transactions can be arranged through the 'back door' by mutually-trusted, more or less dependent partners. Hence a grey area is created between the poles of gift relation and commodity relation, in which the commoditisation of the gift leads to the personalisation of commodity exchanges. Although at first this appears to be paradoxical, it may prove to be true in many contexts: the internal structure of the gift is not immutable, and in a world of commodities we should not be surprised to discover that gifts can gain a commercial aspect.

The person in the gift

An underlying theme in almost all anthropological discussions of the gift and the gift economy is the relationship between persons and material objects, which is also the fundamental issue that Mauss wanted to address. In this connection, studies by Parry and Carrier are particularly noteworthy. Parry (1986) shows that Maori and Hindu ideologies of gift exchange represent fundamentally opposite types: the former requires the reciprocity of every gift given and the latter denies reciprocity, at least in the case of the *dan* gift. However, the Maori and Indian gifts share one thing in common, the absence of an absolute disjunction between persons and things. The separation between

persons and things is, according to Parry (1986: 468), a product of Christian cosmology: 'Christianity – with its notion that all men are fashioned equally in the image of God – has developed a *universalistic* conception of purely disinterested giving'. Furthermore, strong faith in freedom and choice leads to the belief that 'those who make free and unconstrained contracts in the market also make free and unconstrained gifts outside it' (1986: 469; original emphasis).

In line with Parry's view, Carrier argues that the ideology of the perfect gift in the West is shaped by the rise of industrial capitalism. 'Free and disinterested givers and recipients who transact unobligating expressions of affection come into cultural existence with the shift of production out of the affective and substantial relations that exist in the household to the impersonal relations of wage labor and capital' (Carrier 1990: 31). The ideology of the pure gift prevailing in American society is based on two popular conceptions: the gift is immaterial and its material value is beside the point; and the gift is unconstrained and unconstraining – 'it is a pure expression from the heart that does not bind giver and recipient' (1990: 20–21). This ideology, however, does not always accord with everyday practices, for the gifts often are predictable and regulated socially (see Caplow 1982, 1984; Cheal 1988). Thus, the gift relations characterised by Mauss for traditional societies also exist in capitalist societies.

One important implication of Parry's and Carrier's works is that, although gift exchange exists in all human societies, the form it takes varies greatly, depending on the particular culture within which it is rooted. Hence we may find multiple forms of the gift – the Indian gift, the 'Indian gift' (Parry's term for the Melanesian and Polynesian gift), the Japanese gift, the American gift and so on. At a deeper level, different gift forms reflect different kinds of persons and personhood. In Melanesian societies, for example, the person is relationally constructed and in turn represents a set of social relations in his or her social acts, including gift giving. A primary feature of the relational personhood is that 'persons simply do not have alienable items, that is, property at their disposal; they can only dispose of items by enchaining themselves in relations with others' (M. Strathern 1988: 161). By contrast, the free autonomous individual defined by neoclassical economics has nothing intrinsic to his or her personhood but 'bare undifferentiated free will'; everything else is alienable (Radin 1996: 62). In other words, differences in person and personhood provide us the key to better understanding why the Melanesian pure gift is inalienable and thus obligatory, while the Western perfect gift is free and thus must be unconstraining.

Conversely, a Western-oriented understanding of the person in anthropology may contribute to the misunderstanding of the gift in non-Western societies. At the core of the debate about the nature of the gift is its essential

ambiguity; that is, gifts are at once free and constraining, self-interested and disinterested, and are motivated by both generosity and calculation or expectation of return. Although Mauss initiated the anthropological discourse of the gift by taking a both–and approach to examine the ambiguous nature of the gift, most subsequent studies have adopted the either–or approach by focusing on one of the two sides of the same coin. As a result, the principle of reciprocity, the inalienability of the gift and the dichotomy of gift and commodity have dominated the study of the gift. Underneath all these theories, there is a Western notion of the perfect gift, based on the belief of the autonomous and free individual, that has been used to examine gift-giving activities all over the world; hence the enigma of the gift. As Mark Osteen (2002: 240) correctly points out:

> We have met the enemy and he is us: the perfect altruist is nothing more than the obverse face of *Homo economicus* … We will achieve no deeper understanding of gift exchange and their relationships to economic and social behavior until we discard or at least modify the notion of persons as free, unconstrained transactors.

An example of this is the silence about the role of emotionality in non-Western systems of gift exchange. Most existing studies are preoccupied with discovering either the economic rationality or religious beliefs of local people. We have detailed descriptions regarding the patterns of economic transactions, the working principles of reciprocity, the relations between gift giving and cosmology, the interconnection between persons and things. Few studies, by contrast, have touched upon the emotional world of ordinary people and the role that gifts play in expressing emotions. Weiner's (1992) book is no doubt the most radical departure from the rational model of reciprocity and the most thorough effort to date to explore the spiritual aspect of the gift. Nevertheless, it is still difficult to determine whether or not the gifts exchanged in Melanesian and Polynesian societies involve sentiments, even though it is logical to expect some sort of emotional response.

In contrast, studies of gifts in Western societies always emphasise the spontaneous, emotional nature of the gift: Cheal suggests that the gift economy in Western societies is actually part of a culture of love (Cheal 1987: 150–69, 1988: 40–55, 106–20). According to Caplow, emotionality is important in the selection of Christmas gifts in American families. The economic values of any giver's gift are supposed to be sufficiently scaled to the emotional value of relationships, so that

> when they are opened in the bright glare of the family circle, the donor will not appear to have disregarded either the legitimate inequality of some relationships by, for example, giving a more valuable gift to a nephew than to a son, or the legitimate equality of other relationships by, for example, giving conspicuously unequal gifts to two sons. (Caplow 1984: 1313)

This suggests that, in fact, gift recipients are scaled in terms of their social or kinship distance or status in relation to the donor, and that gift exchange is not based on a neutral sense of 'natural feelings' between two parties. Interestingly enough, however, the concern with social distance is translated as the 'emotional value' of the relationship.

The implication here is that the Euro-American ideology of the pure gift may exaggerate the role of emotionality, thus obscuring the fact that gift exchange in such societies is also regulated by many rules and serves to deal with relationships that are important but insecure. Furthermore, this ideology may also lead scholars to overlook the existence of emotionality in non-Western systems of gift exchange, where expression of personal feeling is thought to be similar and thus adds nothing new to the study of the gift. Carrier (1992: 204) warns that a straightforward reading of Mauss's *The gift* by many anthropologists has led to both the orientalisation of an alien 'other' and the occidentalisation of the modern West. As a result, 'the model that had focused on difference between us and them, ignoring similarity, became a definition that denied or elided similarity'. Whether these criticisms can be applied to all anthropological studies of the gift is questionable; but the absence of emotionality in so many studies of the gift in non-Western societies deserves some serious reflection, because, after all, emotionality is perhaps the most personal factor that makes giving gifts different from exchanging commodities.

References

Appadurai, A. 1986. Introduction: commodities and the politics of value. In *The social life of things* (ed.) A. Appadurai. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Befu, H. 1968. Gift-giving in a modernizing Japan. *Monumenta Nipponica* 23: 445–56.

Caplow, T. 1982. Christmas gifts and kin networks. *American Sociological Review* 47: 383–92.

Caplow, T. 1984. Rule enforcement without visible means: Christmas gift giving in Middletown. *American Journal of Sociology* 89: 1306–23.

Carrier, J.G. 1990. Gifts in a world of commodities: the ideology of the perfect gift in American society. *Social Analysis* 29: 19–37.

Carrier, J.G. 1991. Gifts, commodities and social relations: a Maussian view of exchange. *Sociological Forum* 6: 119–36.

Carrier, J.G. 1992. Occidentalism: the world turned upside-down. *American Ethnologist* 19: 195–212.

Carrier, J.G. 1995. *Gifts and commodities: exchange and Western capitalism since 1700*. London: Routledge.

Cheal, D. 1987. 'Showing them you love them': gift giving and the dialectic of intimacy. *Sociological Review* 35: 150–69.

Cheal, D. 1988. *The gift economy*. New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Damon, F.H. 1980. The *kula* and generalised exchange: considering some unconsidered aspects of *The elementary structures of kinship*. *Man* (n.s.) 15: 269–92.

Damon, F.H. 1982. Alienating the inalienable. (correspondence) *Man* (n.s.) 17: 342–3.

Evans-Pritchard, E.E. 1940. *The Nuer*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Feil, D.K. 1982. Alienating the inalienable. (correspondence) *Man* (n.s.) 17: 340–42.

Firth, R. 1959. *Economics of the New Zealand Maori*. Wellington, New Zealand: Government Printer.

Fortes, M. 1949. *The web of kinship among the Tallensi*. London: Oxford University Press.
Godelier, M. 1977. Salt money and the circulation of commodities among the Baruya of New Guinea. In *Perspectives in Marxist anthropology* (ed.) M. Godelier. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Godelier, M. 1999. *The enigma of the gift*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Gregory, C.A. 1980. Gifts to men and gifts to God: gift exchange and capital accumulation in contemporary Papua. *Man* (n.s.) 15: 626–52.
Gregory, C.A. 1982. *Gifts and commodities.* London: Academic Press.
Kipnis, A. 1997. *Producing guanxi: sentiment, self, and subculture in a North China village*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
Komter, A. 1996. Women, gifts and power. In *The gift: an interdisciplinary perspective* (ed.) A. Komter. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
Lebra, T.S. 1969. Reciprocity and the asymmetric principle: an analytical reappraisal of the Japanese concept of *on*. *Psychologia* 12: 129–38.
Liep, J. 1990. Gift exchange and the construction of identity. In *Culture and history in the Pacific* (ed.) J. Siikala. Helsinki: Finnish Anthropological Society.
MacCormack, G. 1976. Reciprocity. *Man* (n.s.) 11: 89–103.
MacCormack, G. 1982. Mauss and the 'spirit' of the gift. *Oceania* 52: 286–93.
Malinowski, B. 1962 (1926). *Crime and custom in savage society*. Paterson, NJ: Littlefield, Adams & Co.
Malinowski, B. 1984 (1922). *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press.
Mars, G. 1982. *Cheats at work: an anthropology of workplace crime*. London: George Allen & Unwin.
Marx, K. 1976 (1867). *Capital*. Vol. 1. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
Mauss, M. 1967 (1925). *The gift: forms and functions of exchange in archaic societies.* New York: W.W. Norton.
Miller, D. 1993. *Unwrapping Christmas*. Oxford: Clarendon.
Morris, I. 1986. Gift and commodity in archaic Greece. *Man* (n.s.) 21: 1–17.
Osteen, M. 2002. Gift or commodity? In *The question of the gift* (ed.) M. Osteen. London: Routledge.
Parry, J. 1986. *The gift*, the Indian gift, and the 'Indian gift'. *Man* (n.s.) 21: 453–73.
Parry, J. and M. Bloch 1989. Introduction: money and the morality of exchange. In *Money and the morality of exchange* (eds) J. Parry and M. Bloch. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Polanyi, K. 1957. *The great transformation*. Boston, Mass.: Beacon.
Radin, M.J. 1996. *Contested commodities.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
Raheja, G.G. 1988. *The poison in the gift: ritual, prestation, and the dominant caste in a North Indian village*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Sahlins, M. 1972. *Stone age economics.* New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
Smart, A. 1997. Oriental despotism and sugar-coated bullets: representations of the market in China. In *Meanings of the market: the free market in Western culture* (ed.) J.G. Carrier. Oxford: Berg.
Strathern, A. 1971. *The rope of moka*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Strathern, A. 1979. Gender, ideology and money in Mount Hagen. *Man* (n.s.) 14: 530–48.
Strathern, M. 1988. *The gender of the gift: problems with women and problems with society in Melanesia*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Strathern, M. 1992. Qualified value: the perspective of gift exchange. In *Barter, exchange and value: an anthropological approach* (eds) C. Humphrey and S. Hugh-Jones. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Thompson, D. 1987. The *hau* of the gift in its cultural context. *Pacific Studies* 11: 63–79.
Vatuk, V.P. and S. Vatuk 1971. The social context of gift exchange in North India. In *Family and social change in modern India* (ed.) G.R. Gupta. Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press.
Waits, W.B. 1993. *The modern Christmas in America: a cultural history of gift giving*. New York: New York University Press.

Weiner, A. 1976. *Women of value, men of renown: new perspectives in Trobriand exchange*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
Weiner, A. 1992. *Inalienable possessions: the paradox of keeping-while-giving*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Werbner, P. 1990. Economic rationality and hierarchical gift economies: value and ranking among British Pakistanis. *Man* (n.s.) 25: 266–85.
Yan, Y. 1996. *The flow of gifts: reciprocity and social networks in a Chinese village*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Yang, M.M. 1994. *Gifts, favors, banquets: the art of social relationships in China*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

16 Barter

Patrick Heady

'Barter' is a non-technical English term which anthropologists have applied to a range of transactions that share certain characteristics. Barter typically denotes the direct exchange of goods or services for each other without the medium of money. Within this broad class of exchanges, the term is generally restricted to those in which the prime focus of interest for the exchange partners is in the goods and services themselves rather than the social relationships arising from the exchange: where social relations are the prime focus of interest the transaction is usually referred to as gift exchange (see Yan chap. 15 supra). However, as we shall see later on, the boundary between barter and gift exchange can be rather fuzzy.

I shall start by looking at the practical advantages and disadvantages of barter compared with exchanges mediated by money, paying a good deal of attention to the questions of 'transaction costs' and how to ensure 'coincidence of wants'. After that, I shall look more closely at the relation between barter and gift exchange. The discussion will be framed within a more general contrast between exchanges in which the partners emphasise their own material advantage at the expense of building goodwill between them, and exchanges (of which the most pronounced are outright gifts) in which the partners forgo some material advantages in order to strengthen their relationship. I shall look at how far, and when, exchanges can become purely material, and whether these circumstances are more typical for barter or money-mediated exchange. I shall also look at situations in which those concerned wish to mark certain exchanges as containing a social element, and the ways in which the difference between monetary and barter exchange can sometimes be used to make the distinction.

Barter can thus be understood from both economic and social perspectives. The final issue is, then, how these two perspectives relate to each other. Is there anything about barter transactions, or at least certain kinds of barter transaction, which implies that they are less subject to economic principles than money-mediated exchanges? And where there is a distinction between more gift-like and more self-centred transactions, is the element of social relationship ever totally missing from the latter, or does it simply take a different form than in the case of the gift? It is the light which barter, in its various forms, throws on questions like these which gives it its wider significance for anthropological theory.

Transaction costs and the problem of identifying a coincidence of wants

In order to clarify the economic logic of barter, we need a notion of cost that does not need to be expressed in monetary terms. In order to grasp this notion of cost, it makes sense to start by thinking of very simple exchange situations. In fact, we can start by considering a situation in which no exchange takes place at all. Let us imagine a group of people who live in total isolation and produce for themselves all the goods they want, using the natural resources available in their locality. Suppose that, among other things, they produce fruit. Does this fruit have a cost? Clearly it does not have a monetary cost, since no exchange is involved. However, there is a sort of cost involved, in the sense that the amount of time and effort required to prune the fruit trees and to pick and store the fruit is not available for other productive purposes, or for leisure. This cost, the amount of alternative goods that must be forgone in order to obtain the fruit, is referred to by economists as the 'opportunity cost' of the fruit. Since there are several other things that could have been done with the time and effort needed to produce the fruit, this opportunity cost could be described in several different ways: in terms of possible improvement to the group's housing, of more time available for hunting or even in terms of more time available for resting.

What happens when we introduce the possibility of exchange into the set-up we have just described? Imagine a situation in which there were two groups of people, who lived in isolation from everyone else. Imagine further that each group of people produced nearly all their needs directly from domestic production, but that each group needed one thing that only the other could provide. Suppose that the first group lived inland and produced fruit but no fish, and that the second group lived on the coast and produced fish but no fruit. Suppose further that the people in each group enjoy eating both fish and fruit. Then we have a simple exchange set-up. It makes sense for each group to produce more of its unique product (fruit or fish) to exchange with the unique product of the other group. In other words it makes sense to barter.

Suppose that the exchanges took place on the coast, and that both sides were content with a rate of exchange in which the inland group gave three fruit for each fish that they received from the coastal group (we shall discuss the factors determining this rate of exchange later). In a sense we can now talk about a price: the price of one fish is three fruit, and the price of one fruit is a third of a fish; or more precisely we can say that these are the prices prevailing in exchanges that take place on the coast. From the point of view of the coastal group, this price reflects the true opportunity cost of the fruit, since once they have handed over a fish they can immediately start eating the three fruit which they have received in exchange. But this is not so for the people who have come from inland to bring the fruit and carry back the fish. From their viewpoint, the opportunity cost of each fish is not simply the three fruit given

in exchange, but also whatever else they could have done with the time and effort needed to make the journey to the coast and back. This additional opportunity cost is the *transaction cost*. When they get back to their inland village, the trading party will want some reward for their time and effort, and as a result they will not be willing to hand over fish to their neighbours at the rate of one fish for three fruit. Perhaps they will ask for four fruit for each fish. The total cost of a fish in the inland village is then four fruit, three of which represent the purchase price of the fish on the coast, and one of which represents the transaction costs. If the trading journey had taken place in the opposite direction, with coastal people carrying their fish inland to exchange in the inland village, the story would be the same. The purchase price of each fruit (in the inland village) would be one-quarter of a fish, but its sale price (on the coast) would be one-third of a fish. The difference (one-twelfth of a fish) represents the transaction cost.

If the transaction cost were higher, each community would be worse off, since the opportunity cost of fish in the inland village, and of fruit in the coastal village, would both be greater. In the example we have considered, in which the transaction costs were simply due to the time and effort involved in transportation, one could expect the transaction costs to be higher if the villages were further apart. However, there are other factors as well which might increase the transaction costs. These all involve, in one way or another, the problem of 'coincidence of wants', the difficulty of bringing together a person who can offer good A and wants good B, with a suitable trading partner who wants good A and can offer good B. These are the problems which money can help with, and their importance explains why most trade in the modern world is carried out with the medium of money (see Hart chap. 10 supra).

In order to illustrate these problems, let us develop our example a little bit more. Suppose that the fishing season takes place in the spring, and the fruit-picking season in the autumn, and that neither good is easily conserved. In that case, when the inland people bring their fruit down to the coast, the coastal people will have nothing to offer in exchange. If they are to trade their fruit at all, the inland people will have to offer the fishing people credit, and hope that they will fulfil their side of the bargain by delivering the fish that they owe next spring. If the inland people do not know their coastal trading partners very well, there is always the risk that they may give some of their fruit to unreliable individuals who will fail to deliver the due amount of fish. This risk of default on credit amounts to an additional transaction cost, and therefore will tend to discourage trade between the two villages. It also provides the first situation we have considered in which money exchange would have an advantage over barter. If there were a form of money available which was accepted by both the coastal and the inland people, then it would be possible for the inland people to insist on payment in this currency when they delivered

the fruit in the autumn, and use the same currency to purchase the fish they required in the spring. The same would, of course, apply to transactions initiated by the coastal community. The necessity of credit and the risk of default would have been removed, thus reducing the transaction costs for both communities.

Problems of the coincidence of wants also arise when the economy becomes more complex. Suppose that some of the people in the inland community grow apples while others grow pears, and that some of the coastal community fish for herrings while others catch octopus. Suppose that a man from the inland community has a load of pears which he wishes to exchange for octopus. There is no guarantee that the first person he meets when he arrives at the coast will wish to exchange octopuses for pears. Half of the people he meets will offer him herrings, which he does not want, while half of the rest would rather exchange their octopuses for apples than for pears. He will, therefore, have to spend some time, and hence opportunity cost, contacting the right person to make the exchange. This problem is perhaps not very serious in our example. However, when you start to think of more complex economies in which many householders wish to obtain dozens, or even hundreds, of different kinds of good by exchange every week, then it becomes clear that arranging for each person to meet with people who wanted to make a direct exchange between the product he or she had for sale, and the many different products he or she wished to buy, would be a very complex business indeed. However, if there were a currency which all concerned were willing to accept, this problem would be greatly reduced. In that case, a man who arrived at the coastal village with pears to sell would only need to identify a few people who wanted to buy pears, and it would not matter whether or not they wished to sell octopuses, or any of the other goods he wished to buy. All he need do is sell his pears to those few people for money, and use the money to buy octopuses and other things from the people who had them to sell, secure in the knowledge that they would accept cash, even if they did not care for pears.[1]

Some real-world examples of the choice between monetary exchange and barter

The essential point of the previous section is that money provides advantages in situations where it is not easy to bring together partners who want to make corresponding exchanges of actual goods. If the argument is sound, we would expect to encounter barter in situations where finding a partner with coincident exchange wants is relatively unproblematic, or where the transaction-cost advantage of monetary exchange is counteracted by some other disadvantage. In fact there is a good deal of evidence which is consistent with these expectations.

Some real situations correspond quite closely to the artificial example

discussed above, particularly when, in mountainous environments, neighbouring communities at differing altitudes specialise in different crops, so that the existence of demand for one's own crop and of the supply of the neighbouring crop are well known to all concerned. Among the examples of this phenomenon are communities in Bulgaria (Cellarius 2000: 78–9) and in Nepal (Humphrey 1985, 1992).

Closely related are situations in which one crop, potatoes or grain, can be bartered for a wide range of goods. Here the disadvantage of barter compared with money is partly removed by the fact that demand for the core foodstuff is so nearly universal that its acceptability as a means of payment is assured. In many Indian villages, various specialists used to be paid in grain instead of, or as well as, cash (see Harriss chap. 33 infra).[2] Cellarius's study of barter exchange in a Bulgarian mountain village provides a particularly neat illustration of the importance of transaction costs. The village concerned is rather isolated, and most residents did not possess their own motor transport. Traders drove trucks up from the lowland towns with all kinds of goods, which they often exchanged for potatoes. The arrangement must have suited the traders, because they could use the empty space in their trucks to carry the potatoes back to town for very little cost. There was not much disadvantage for the local people since, in the village, everything that could be bought for cash could also be paid for with potatoes. Logically enough, the only people interviewed by Cellarius who insisted on selling their potatoes for cash, and making all their purchases in cash, were a family with their own motor transport, who could therefore take advantage of the greater flexibility that cash offered for making purchases in the more variegated shops and markets outside the valley (Cellarius 2000: 80).

Another factor which, in recent years, had pushed the inhabitants of Cellarius's village towards barter had been a dramatic fall in their cash incomes, occasioned by the closure of the local collective farm, which had previously provided many of the village people with money wages (2000: 76–7). The villagers moved away from the money economy because money was scarce. People can also move to barter when they no longer trust money because of inflation, devaluation or bank defaults. A combination of increased scarcity of money, and a sense of insecurity about whether it could hold its value, seems to have been one of the factors behind the very widespread use of barter by Russian businesses in the late 1990s (Seabright 2000: 4–5).

The unusual extent of inter-business barter in 1990s Russia may have had another cause as well. Before the collapse of communism, a complex system of state planning organised the distribution of materials and outputs between different enterprises. Even after the formal freeing of state enterprises from central control, many of the interpersonal contacts established through this system were still in place, and could be used to identify complex systems of

multi-party exchange which would result in a coincidence of wants and supplies (Ledeneva and Seabright 2000: 99; Prendergast and Stole 2000: 50). This may have made inter-enterprise barter in Russia more feasible than it would have been in a system without that country's heritage of detailed state planning.

A final point is that monetary transactions are often subject to tax. In such situations barter may provide a way of avoiding the attentions of the tax-man. Tax avoidance is an important factor in some contemporary barter networks in both Russia and the United States (Humphrey and Hugh-Jones 1992: 6; Ledeneva 2000).

Overall, then, the argument that the prevalence or otherwise of barter can be explained by the relative transaction costs of monetary and non-monetary exchange seems to be well supported by available evidence.

Barter, commodities and gift exchange

Having established when barter is likely to take place, it is time to describe and analyse the barter process itself. Here we meet an interesting dichotomy. According to some descriptions, the transacting partners haggle in order to obtain the very best bargain for themselves at the other's expense, so that the relations between barter partners are characterised by a degree of implicit hostility. Bronislaw Malinowski's (1978 [1922]: 95–6, 187–90, 361–4) description of the barter deals that took place as part of Trobriand trading expeditions highlights the haggling involved, and contrasts this with the more dignified gift exchange of *kula* valuables with which the leaders were involved (see Strathern and Stewart chap. 14 supra). At one point in his study of *Stone age economics*, Marshall Sahlins (1974: 195) suggests that barter should be considered a kind of negative reciprocity that people engage in with outsiders with whom relationships are anyway hostile. However, in the same book, he (1974: 277–314) also describes barter practices which are quite unlike this, in which the trading partners avoid all bargaining, but instead exchange without argument at generally accepted prices. There are many reports of this kind of barter process, which often involves some of the courtesies that go with gift exchange. Indeed, in real-world barter transactions, this rather decorous way of proceeding seems to be just as typical as the haggling approach (Herskovits 1965: 188–96).

In order to understand what is going on here, it is useful to refer to a distinction between commodity and gift exchanges. As defined by Gregory (1982), who draws on the ideas of Marcel Mauss (2002 [1923]) and Karl Marx, commodity transactions involve the exchange of unlike goods and services in order to obtain a material benefit or profit, while the partners in gift exchange present each other with goods and services which are basically alike in order to reinforce the social relationships between them. The commodity

perspective is the one adopted by standard microeconomic theory, of the kind which this chapter has drawn on up this point.

Microeconomic theory can also help us understand some aspects of the style of barter transactions. In particular, it can help us to understand why some barter transactions involve adversarial bargaining. As we saw earlier, one of the advantages of monetary exchange over barter is that it reduces transaction costs by replacing the comparatively rare exchange partnerships, in which good A would be directly exchanged for good B, with far more frequent potential partnerships in which good A and good B are both exchanged for money. The relative scarcity of partners available for any particular direct exchange has another disadvantage as well, in that it creates situations in which, although both parties benefit from the transaction, the gain experienced by one party is inversely related to the gain experienced by the other. The argument concerned goes back to F.Y. Edgeworth (1881: 20–30, cited by Pressman 1999: 70–72), who showed that the exchange rate offered in a bartering transaction (or any kind of trade) is fully determined only when each party to the transaction has many potential exchange partners. Where the number of potential partners is small, or simply consists of the two partners actually present, then there will usually be a range of exchange rates that would leave both partners feeling better off than before. This sets limits beyond which one or other party would pull out of the deal altogether. However, within these limits, the particular exchange rate selected will depend on the relative bargaining power and skill of the two parties, in a zero-sum (at least within limits) game in which an increased benefit for one partner represents a decrease in the benefit to the other.

So, within the commodity-exchange framework, we can understand why barter sometimes involves a process of adversarial haggling. By why is this not always the case? One problem with adversarial bargaining is that it is unlikely to leave the exchange partners feeling very friendly to each other. This need not matter if the bargaining takes place in a framework where social rules are guaranteed by some other authority, such as a state, or the local big man who sponsors a particular market. But it would be very serious indeed if the traders came from different and potentially antagonistic ethnic groups. This is often the case when the trade takes place between partners from different ecological zones: highlanders with lowlanders, or between people from different islands. It is in these circumstances that we find the trade taking gift-like forms, such as between trading partners who are ritual friends themselves or who are, as in the case of the barter that takes place in the margins of the *kula* expeditions, under the protection of expedition leaders who are ritual friends. The transactions have a gift-like element, because they could not take place without the existence of the secure social relationship which the gift-like aspects of the transaction help to ensure.

Nevertheless, however decorously they are conducted, barter transactions between ritual friends do not really fit into Gregory's category of gift exchange, because the things exchanged are not alike. In a detailed study of gift-like barter between communities at different altitudes in eastern Nepal, Humphrey (1992) argues that the idea that the things exchanged should be of *equivalent value* provides a basis for a sense of moral commitment between trading partners which resembles that established by gift exchange. This interpretation fits well with the numerous reports of barter exchanges which take place without any bargaining, using locally accepted 'fair' prices.

The next question is whether the importance of this notion of equivalent value, and the associated instances of gift-like behaviour, interfere with the operation of the commodity-like microeconomic mechanisms described in the first part of this chapter. The answer seems to be that they do not interfere too much. Humphrey (1985) provides data on the variation of exchange rates in relation to the distance between the points of origin of the goods concerned which are broadly in line with the hypothetical analysis given earlier in this chapter, and also reports changing exchange rates in response to major changes in supply conditions. Sahlins commented earlier (1974) on similar data for barter trade in Melanesia. The explanation offered by Sahlins, which is confirmed by Humphrey's data, is that what counts as a fair price is judged with respect to the range of exchange rates being offered in the locality. If the rate offered by one's partner is out of line with this, there is no need to engage in adversarial haggling; one simply opens up a new gift-like relationship with a partner whose exchange rate is more reasonable (Sahlins 1974: 312–14).

Indeed, the ability to weigh up the gains and losses from the whole of a particular exchange relationship, rather than simply those arising from the latest exchange within it, makes it possible to cultivate or withdraw from gift relationships on utilitarian grounds, and therefore provides an incentive for each partner to play his or her part in the relationship, even in the absence of any specific reckoning of the returns resulting from any particular gift from one partner to the other. This point is crucial to understanding the operation of the *blat* system during the communist period in Russia. As described by Ledeneva (1998), *blat* arose in response to the chronic shortages of the soviet economy, which were themselves the result of official refusal to let prices rise and fall in order to balance supply and demand. This official refusal of the price mechanism was supported by public opinion which, in addition, strongly disapproved of 'speculators' who tried to profit from this situation by selling scarce goods unofficially at prices above the official ones. However, the same disapproval did not apply to people who merely helped others obtain the scarce goods at the ordinary price. *Blat* was essentially a system by which people with control over a particular scarce good – anything from shoes to building materials, educational opportunities or medical care – enabled their

acquaintances to gain access to a good in scarce supply, hoping that in return the beneficiary would enable them to gain access to something they needed later on. Since the goods themselves were either free or paid for to the supplying organisation at the official rate, monetary payments were not involved, nor was it generally a matter of a direct exchange of material benefits. Instead, the relationship was maintained in the expectation that over the long term it would provide benefits to both sides. Once prices were freed in the 1990s and goods became more freely available in the shops, the *blat* system of exchanging favours lost some of its importance (Ledeneva 1998: 179).

Humphrey and Hugh-Jones (1992: 7) have suggested that barter transactions should be considered as a third category of exchange, distinct from either gift or commodity exchange, that should be studied in its own right. However, the material presented above suggests that it might not be a very good idea to construct a distinct sub-discipline of barter studies. One point is that the different examples of barter are quite diverse, and would be hard to reduce to a single ideal type. A second and more fundamental point is that the things which the different examples of barter have in common are also shared with commodity and gift exchanges. The participants are concerned to obtain access to goods without giving too much in return (as would be expected in commodity transactions). But they are also conscious that the way they conduct their transactions conveys messages about their mutual relationship and needs to be planned in a way that will maintain that relationship (as would be expected in gift exchange).

Rather than splitting out a new category of barter, it might be better to say that all exchanges have two aspects: first as transfer of goods or services, and second as a sign of the nature of the relationship between the exchange partners. Commodity exchanges are those in which the partners' attention is focused on the first aspect, and gift exchanges are those in which attention is focused on the second aspect. In many exchanges, including most barter exchanges but also many monetary exchanges, the partners give some attention to both aspects. In the next section, I shall try to show that this dual perspective helps us to understand the phenomenon of multiple spheres of exchange.

Spheres of exchange

One area to which some of the arguments we have considered above might usefully be applied would be the English family. After all, a marriage involves some kind of division of tasks between the two spouses, and the goods these tasks produce – such as meals, shelter and warmth, clean clothes – matter to each. At the same time, the relationship also matters in itself, and the spouses regularly attempt to strengthen it by exchanging gifts. In a traditional, but now

relatively rare, form of marriage the husband undertakes paid work while the wife is responsible for managing the housework. A more common arrangement now is for both partners to do paid work, though the husband may still be the main earner, and for there to be a rather more even division of labour within the household as well.

Does this mean that the economic basis of British marriage is shifting from cash purchase of the wife's services by the husband, to the bartering of services between the spouses? Given the way I have developed the concept of barter in the previous section, this would be a fairly reasonable statement to make, but it still sounds distinctly odd. Part of the reason may be that the term 'purchase' suggests a commodity transaction, which appears to be contradicted by the exchanges of gifts that also go on within the traditional marriage. The arrangements of a traditional marriage thus challenge an implicit assumption of the discussion up to now, namely that monetary payments are exclusively associated with commodity exchange. But the real reason why the statement sounds odd is probably deeper, namely that we do not think of marriage primarily as an exchange of services between the two partners. Instead we see it as the basis of a family and feel that the partners should each subordinate their own interests to that of the family as a whole, and in particular to the well-being of their children. The attitude of mind that this calls for is simply not the same as the attitude of mind involved in commodity transactions (whether by cash or barter), or even gift relationships outside the family home.[3]

In that sense the family constitutes a different sphere of exchange from the external world of the job market and the shopping centre. Although material self-interest certainly does play a role in intra-family transactions (see Becker 1981), it is under tighter constraints than apply in the economy outside the household, and the resulting difference in exchange rules is reinforced by our feeling that it is inappropriate to apply the same concepts to exchanges in the two spheres.

This point about distinct spheres of exchange was first made by Paul Bohannan (1955) in a classic article about exchange and investment among the Tiv people of northern Nigeria (see Hart chap. 10 supra). He also noted that the Tiv conceptualise exchanges of services between kin entirely separately from exchanges between non-kin. As in the British case, exchanges between kin are meant ideally to be a direct expression of mutual commitment rather than a matter of calculation, though the range of Tiv kin involved is probably rather wider than in the British case. As in the British case, the distinction is reinforced by the use of a different vocabulary to talk about kinship and non-kinship exchanges.

However, among the Tiv, exchanges between non-kin were also divided into three distinct spheres, also distinguished by different vocabularies and

conceptual systems: one for minor goods, a second for prestigious goods and the third for the exchange of women in marriage. Although it was possible to use success in a lower sphere to buy access to exchanges in one of the higher spheres, this had not been easy until a few decades before Bohannan's fieldwork. It was fairly clear that the restrictions were part of the Tiv political system, reinforcing the power of lineage elders and enabling them to control much of the social and reproductive destiny of their clan members. Thus, consistently with the dual nature of exchange as both material transactions and signs of relationships, these restrictions on legitimate exchange transactions reflected both an ordering of ideas and a way of controlling access to resources.

Why this theme belongs in a discussion of barter is that Bohannan himself believed that the system was threatened by the spread of Western money in Tiv land. He argued that the division into three spheres was dependent on rules about what could be bartered for what, which broke down with the appearance of Western money that could be used to purchase goods in all three spheres.

However, despite the Tiv experience, the general thesis that modern money tends to destroy the distinction between spheres of exchange seems to have rather little empirical support. In the British case, as we have just seen, money is important in both the family and the commercial sphere, but subject to different rules in both. (Indeed it is also crucial to the third sphere of exchange in modern Britain: that between the state and the citizen. Here again it is subject to different rules than in the other two spheres.) In a general review of this issue in their *Money and the morality of exchange*, Maurice Bloch and Johnathan Parry (1989) concluded that the distinction between a sphere of self-interested exchange and a superior sphere of more prestigious exchange subject to moral rules was a feature of all societies. However, they did not find any general tendency for money to be particularly associated with the potentially immoral sphere of self-interested exchange.

Conclusion

Microeconomic ideas about the costs of transactions are rather effective in identifying the situations in which barter is preferred to monetary exchange, and also help to explain the rates of exchange between goods even when barter takes forms which resemble gift exchange. But in order to understand why a particular series of barter exchanges is more commodity-like or more gift-like we need to take account of the socio-political context of the exchange, and of the dual aspect of exchange episodes as material transactions and as signals of the nature of the personal relationships involved. This part of the analysis, however, applies to money-mediated exchange just as much as to barter, and the phenomenon of distinct spheres of exchange, which some writers associate

particularly with barter-based economies, turns out to be more general. Because barter transactions resist oversimplified analysis, they provide a useful way of testing and extending the concepts which we apply to exchange in general, but they do not call for a distinct body of theory unique to barter.

Notes

1. For more technical treatments of the topics discussed in this section, see Anderlini and Sabourian (1992) and Dutta (2000).
2. See Fuller (1989) for a critical discussion of the literature on this topic.
3. See Carrier (1995: 31–5) for a fuller discussion of this point.

References

Anderlini, L. and H. Sabourian 1992. Some notes on the economics of barter, money and credit. In *Barter, exchange and value: an anthropological approach* (eds) C. Humphrey and S. Hugh-Jones. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Becker, G. 1981. *A treatise on the family*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Bloch, M. and J. Parry 1989. Introduction: money and the morality of exchange. In *Money and the morality of exchange* (eds) J. Parry and M. Bloch. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bohannan, P. 1955. Some principles of exchange and investment among the Tiv. *American Anthropologist* 57: 60–70.

Carrier, J.G. 1995. *Gifts and commodities: exchange and Western capitalism since 1700*. London: Routledge.

Cellarius, B.A. 2000. 'You can buy almost anything with potatoes': an examination of barter during economic crisis in Bulgaria. *Ethnology* 39: 73–92.

Dutta, J. 2000. Some lasting thing: barter and the value of money. In *The vanishing rouble: barter networks and non-monetary transactions in post-Soviet societies* (ed.) P. Seabright. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Edgeworth, F.Y. 1881. *Mathematical psychics: an essay on the application of mathematics to the moral sciences*. London: C. Kegan Paul & Co.

Fuller, C.J. 1989. Misconceiving the grain heap: a critique of the concept of the Indian Jajmani system. In *Money and the morality of exchange* (eds) J. Parry and M. Bloch. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gregory, C.A. 1982. *Gifts and commodities*. New York: Academic Press.

Herskovits, M.J. 1965. *Economic anthropology: the economic life of primitive peoples*. New York: W.W. Norton.

Humphrey, C. 1985. Barter and economic disintegration. *Man* (n.s.) 20: 48–72.

Humphrey, C. 1992. Fair dealing, just rewards: the ethics of barter in North-East Nepal. In *Barter, exchange and value: an anthropological approach* (eds) C. Humphrey and S. Hugh-Jones. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Humphrey, C. and S. Hugh-Jones (eds) 1992. *Barter, exchange and value: an anthropological approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ledeneva, A.V. 1998. *Russia's economy of favours:* blat, *networking and informal exchange*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ledeneva, A.V. 2000. Shadow barter: economic necessity or economic crime? In *The vanishing rouble: barter networks and non-monetary transactions in post-Soviet societies* (ed.) P. Seabright. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ledeneva, A.V. and P. Seabright 2000. Barter in post-Soviet societies: what does it look like, and why does it matter. In *The vanishing rouble: barter networks and non-monetary transactions in post-Soviet societies* (ed.) P. Seabright. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Malinowski, B. 1978 (1922). *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Mauss, M. 2002 (1923). *The gift: the form and reason for exchange in archaic societies*. London: Routledge.

Prendergast, C. and L. Stole 2000. Barter relationships. In *The vanishing rouble: barter networks and non-monetary transactions in post-Soviet societies* (ed.) P. Seabright. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Pressman, S. 1999. *Fifty major economists*. London: Routledge.
Sahlins, M. 1974. *Stone age economics*. London: Tavistock.
Seabright, P. (ed.) 2000. *The vanishing rouble: barter networks and non-monetary transactions in post-Soviet societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

17 The anthropology of markets

Kalman Applbaum

Reviews of the anthropology of markets customarily begin by dwelling on the distinction between physical marketplaces and 'the market principle' – or 'the diffuse interaction of suppliers and demanders' that determines the 'prices of labor, resources and outputs … regardless of the site of transactions' (Bohannan and Dalton 1965: 2; see, for example, Plattner 1989). Thus, a periodic, peasant or open-air market on the one hand, and the global electronic futures market for soybeans or eurodollars on the other.

The present chapter also marks this distinction, but with the alternative aim of demonstrating the virtues of phasing out the division for advancing the field. I do not claim to be trailblazing a new path, but to be reporting upon a palpable trend that has perhaps not been explicitly articulated in these terms. It is in the review of select recent market ethnographies that I call to the reader's attention a de facto bridging, convergence or integration of the two kinds of markets in fact and in theory, or at least the positioning of the two on a continuum, and a decline of the split model as an inspiration for empirical research. In so far as I continue referring to the two 'types' to make my point, I shall use the conventional vocabulary of market principle and marketplace, or sometimes more pithily, the abstract vs. the empirical market (Slater 1993).

Globalisation and trade concentration

Increasingly exchange transactions occurring anywhere in the world can only be understood with reference to external agencies. Bilateral exchanges in even remote corners of the world cannot be comprehensively understood without meaningful reference to the global contingencies and determinants conditioning the exchange. The purchase of a hand-crafted basket in a Vientiane outdoor market, the consumption of cheese produced on a kibbutz by its own members in the Galilee, or the return of a defective contact lens to an optician in Peoria are each subject to economic (and demonstrably cultural economic; see Bird-David 1997) conditions that involve the global system of which I speak.[1] Correspondingly, even global commercial exchanges of the most abstract kind (such as electronic fund transfers in financial markets) are only relatively more suitable to framing in terms independent of local cultural and social processes.

As primary exchange locations, marketplaces of all sorts are both sites of global commercial integration as well as one of the principal vehicles by

which it is accomplished. The production of cash crops, or for that matter craft goods, locally for the world market (for example, Mayer and Glave 1999; Nash 1993; Rosenbaum and Goldin 1997) is the other side of this coin. But this sort of 'commodification',[2] though significant for considering the organisation of production and other aspects of local life and economy, is not as germane for us as is the physical and spatial reformulation of a given marketplace so as better to serve the manufactured commodity trade in a corresponding 'mode of exchange' (Lie 1992). The transposition from an assemblage of open-air stalls located on the grounds of a temple and open for business on significant days of a week or month to an enclosed structure with full-time shops that might more closely resemble those found in an urban mall, or the sweeping away of itinerant textile peddlers with movable stands on a pedestrian strip where air-conditioned boutiques are opening one by one, suggests a change of a more fundamental sort, in which the medium of exchange, to evoke Marshall McLuhan's catchphrase, becomes part of the commodity itself. Professional marketers are of course aware of this connection and effort to incorporate this into their strategies.[3]

Marketplace relocation, reconfiguration and, ultimately, trade concentration illuminate a part of the trajectory of the convergence of marketplaces and market principle. I raise a couple of examples of research in this area to illustrate the connections.

The leading researcher and advocate of the study of trade concentration (in conjunction with economic development and mass consumerism in Third-World societies) is Norbert Dannhaeuser (1989, 1994, 1996; see also Lessinger 1988; Matejowsky 2002). Trade concentration, Dannhaeuser (1996: 176) says,

> involves the emergence of vertically integrated market channels in the consumer goods sector (dealerships, franchises, branch networks) away from vertically fragmented channels. It also involves a proliferation of increasingly large retail facilities (department stores, supermarkets, hypermarkets, malls, supercentres and so on), often at the expense of small and independent vendors, shops, and family-operated street stores.

The implications of this formulation for marketplaces as structures of exchange, the forms of which affect the content of what, how, among whom and in many cases whose goods are exchanged, should be nearly self-evident. There may be no expressive limitations of what style of cuisine is sold at franchised restaurants, for instance, but the economics of food franchising does imply a certain pattern of exchange organisation (that is, buyer–seller interface), location, and possibly the content of what is sold. This is because of the tendency for franchised restaurants to derive their profits from selling convenience and speed. This and other marketing considerations find their

way directly into the form of the food sold, such that it begins to make sense to speak of 'industrial' or 'commodity' food (Lien 1997). The trade concentration research also implies a definition of globalisation that incorporates changes to the built environment as being a consequence of commercial generalisation, for which the term 'urban capitalist development' (Lessinger 1988: 141) gives accurate expression. Indeed, for Dannhaeuser and others who focus on this subject, trade concentration at once implies globalisation (bridging differences between urban areas) and a foreshortening of rural–urban market distinctions.

The appearance of a shopping mall does not necessarily result in the demise of older, less-profitable, perhaps less-alienated types of exchange outlets. On the contrary, these outlets are typically drawn into competition with the newer venues, and are thereby incorporated within the market ecology of the newer forms. Open-air marketplaces, their customer base as well as their traders, can come to represent a peripheral niche 'in constant competition, or permanent metabolic exchange' (to borrow Ernest Mandel's [1972: 47] expression describing primitive and capital accumulation) within the larger market system that is dominated by international commodity-type transactions. They are not, in Mandel's words again, '*successive* phases of economic history but also *concurrent* economic processes' (1972: 46; original emphasis).

Not only are the marketplaces themselves 'peripheralised' economically and geographically, but their customer base and traders can correspondingly be marginalised. Deborah Kapchan (1996: 34) describes a Moroccan *suq*:

> The suq has already moved once in Beni Mellal to accommodate town expansion and remain on its outer limits … Town officials plan to move the suq once again – this time well beyond the limits of town so there is no risk of habitation encompassing it again … This impending move is symbolic: distancing the traditional institution of the itinerant weekly suq will act to separate the emergent middle and upper middle classes, who prefer boutiques and who can afford to pay the higher prices of the neighborhood greengrocer, from the lower echelon of society who buy used clothing and rely on price negotiation to economize every penny.

As an addendum to marginalisation in Kapchan's case, as in other studies, it is observed that in the context of various global economic pressures, such as structural adjustment policies (itself a child of market principle or, per below, market model), and mediated by dominant gender ideologies within the division of labour in different locales, 'more women turn to market vending for purposes of survival and poorer members of society find they can only afford what is sold by informal market women' (Seligmann 2001: 21).[4]

A final consideration on the subject of trade concentration concerns corporate marketing distribution channel vertical integration.[5] This locomotive of industry and capitalist expansion is not the only cause of trade

concentration and the interconnecting of markets around the world; however, it is an important factor that anthropologists have tended to ignore. Again, Dannhaeuser is exceptional in this regard when he observes (1985: 194) from his research in India and the Philippines:

> The distribution of industrial consumer products … play a far from passive role in their relations with retailers. Large firms actively try to push products down the channels, and while doing so, they affect the nature of the retail structure … Power becomes focused in the upper channel levels, and once these supply firms toward mass marketing, many of them are led … into active distribution and a desire to control product flow into intermediate [sized] towns.

To convey a direct sense of how corporations' strategic aim to purvey their products through channels (including marketplaces, or what marketers sometimes call points of purchase) in developing countries leads to the alteration of the contours of those places, I cite a manager at a transnational household care products company (Applbaum 2000: 273), who was explaining to me his firm's activities in Mexico over the course of several years while he was 'country manager':

> I would have to say in general that we began by adapting to the local distribution system more than we brought innovation to it. I think we did encourage, by demonstration, some learning for our Mexican counterparts. Where we are concerned, obviously the more self-service distribution is the better it is for us because that way we are dealing with fewer customers and the product is on the shelf for the consumer to choose. So we tend to promote those chains of distribution more than the traditional wholesaler, the mom and pop store … I guess in Mexico we have done a lot of work helping the club stores come in, particularly Sam's and Price Club, so that indirectly has changed the distribution in Mexico. I think club stores went from three percent to nine percent in the laundry business in the time I was there, which is fairly significant and still growing. A lot of good evolution going on down there, not just in distribution … We have those relationships [with Sam's Club, Price Club] up here and then follow them down there. We have been working with other stores to get going – so we encourage channels that we work better with to grow.

Yet another manager from the same company working in Puerto Rico explained to me how the scanning technology in US grocery stores provides a big advantage to the manufacturers because where there are scanners, the shoppers can use coupons and other devices that the manufacturer distributes according to its perceived advantage.

> All these sophisticated vehicles, like the electronic loyalty programs, frequent shopper cards, all this intelligent information about consumers to reward them or if they buy a competitor's product to coupon them at the checkout counter. That's non-existent here. Without that tool, it gives the retailers a lot more power because you can only depend on the retail trade to push your product.

The significance of the first trend, the growth in market share of the giant-sized club stores as against the previous distribution channel arrangements, lies in the fact that the configuration of the local market is altered to make life simpler for the foreign manufacturer. The common pattern is from small to large retail, personal to self-service, urban to suburban location, and often foreign ownership grows directly in the share of the facility itself and indirectly through the products sold there. The second example illustrates, among other things, how installation of a distant manufacturer's information technology system is likely to alter merchandising patterns beyond the retail outlet itself. To the extent that a firm can retrieve data from the point of sale, it can supply the proper amount of product to the retailer as well as possess important market information about the buying patterns of the customer population. Such efficiencies make it logical for a firm to try to install this technology wherever it sells products. This highly visible linkage between a manufacturer in North America and a marketplace in the Caribbean brings us to the next set of concerns anthropologists have recently been considering with respect to markets.

Commodity chains and the 'supply–market–demand complex'

Anthropologists studying markets have long considered how the type of commodity can affect the structure of trade in and in relation to the market (for example, Schwimmer 1979; Trager 1981). Others have described how trade in particular commodities is dominated by specific ethnic groups (for example, Alvarez 1994; Cohen 1969). With the introduction of a renewed methodological focus on the commodity from both cultural anthropological (Kopytoff 1986) and world-systems or political economic (Gereffi and Korzeniewicz 1994) approaches, and with the urging of 'multi-sited ethnography' (Marcus 1998) suitable to an age in which 'global flows' (Appadurai 1996) are characteristic of many areas of experience, not just economic, studies of the market have themselves begun to vertically integrate, by theorising both upstream (supply chains) and downstream (the culture of demand) activities.[6]

One ambitious attempt at assimilation of these ideas into a specific research project with globalisation in mind is Theodore Bestor's Tsukiji Market sushi project (1999, 2001). From the point of view of the world's largest fish market – 1677 stalls, 2000 categories and sub-categories of 2.8 million kilograms of seafood daily, 60,000 customers and traders daily, and about $6 billion worth of fish bought and sold annually – it is not difficult to see why Bestor (1999: 205) describes Tsukiji as 'the focal point for thousands of distinct commodity chains' and 'a central node for the global seafood trade'. Following the bluefin tuna trade from specific harvesting locations in New England, the coast of Trafalgar, Spain, and then back to Tokyo, Bestor is able to convey a sense of the immediacy of the global dimensions for this prized fish. Bestor describes

an isolated Bath, Maine, dock scene at dusk. About 20 buyers from as far south as New Jersey, half of them Japanese, crowd around three tuna

> extracting tiny core samples to examine the color, fingering the flesh to assess the fat content, sizing up the curve of the body to guess what the inside of each fish would look like when cut open, and checking carefully the condition of the bodies for damage from harpoons or careless handling. (2001: 79)

After a short period, the Japanese buyers return to their trucks to call Tokyo on their cell phones to get the morning prices for bluefin tuna at the Tsukiji market, which has just finished its auctions for the day. On the basis of this information, secret bids are submitted to the dock manager and the deals are closed. The fish are packed in ice and loaded in the back of trucks that head for JFK airport in New York, 'where the tuna will be air-freighted to Tokyo for sale the next day' (2001: 80).

While Bestor offers only enticing snapshots of the supply side (as compared with the systematic analyses of the social organisation of supply found in the work of, for example, Acheson 1985; Finan 1988), his demonstration of how the inflated commercial value of the fish (the record price for a single tuna was $170,000, on 5 January 2001) is determined by a set of coherent cultural expectations by traders in Tokyo, who are in turn responding to the demands of their customers. Bestor makes detailed application of Marshall Sahlins's illustration of the 'meaningful calculus of food preferences' (1976: 171) being 'the symbolic logic which organizes demand' (1976: 176) in the market for meat in the United States. He then relates the specifics of Japanese culinary tastes to the organisation of the market, which is not merely a mirror for what one might call the social relations of consumption, but a contributor to it.[7] Bestor says, 'The market and its provisioning roles are also generators of cultural meaning – they allocate and confirm the "cultural capital" of market traders, chefs, restaurateurs, and retailers who in turn fashion the social formation of "distinction" [Bourdieu 1984]' (1999: 203).

The particular agency of traders, marketers and other middlemen or women in the fashioning of taste forms an important component of the supply–market–demand complex that anthropologists are progressively pursuing, whether they formulate it in these terms or not. Traders, particularly in the situations of long-distance exchange that typify contemporary market activities, are not best thought of as passive purveyors of goods, as the expression 'middleman' or 'go-between' might imply. Instead, as Christopher Steiner (1994) has argued in his study of art traders in an Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, market, long-distance trade generates the opportunity for creative obfuscation of the true nature of the article of trade, to the advantage of the trader. Steiner is reporting on the market for (West) African art in Abidjan and ultimately beyond.[8] His ethnography is a pithy example of how much of the

supply–market–demand complex can be comprehended. A brief recapitulation of Steiner's undertaking and insights is worthwhile.

In his words, 'This book takes as its unit of study a group of both itinerant and settled merchants who specialize in the commerce of African art – middlemen who either link village-level object-owners, or contemporary artists and artisans, to Western collectors, dealers and tourists' (Steiner 1994: 2). In this case, even more than tuna to the sushi-loving Japanese, the highly symbolic freight of the commodity itself invites complex variabilities that influence the structure of trade and expand the role of the traders to that of 'cultural brokers' in the processes of acquiring and selling the objects.

> Because the merchandise the traders buy and sell is defined, classified and evaluated largely in terms of Western concepts such as 'art' and 'authenticity,' the traders are not only moving a set of objects through the world economic system, they are also exchanging information – mediating, modifying, and commenting on a broad spectrum of cultural knowledge. (1994: 2)

In making at least a superficial number of forays back to the source for the art (a trip that the Abidjan market traders themselves do not make, instead relying on intermediaries), Steiner is able to discover asymmetries of information occurring at different places in the supply chain, principally turning on the 'authenticity' of the art. Authenticity is an issue because by this point the majority of the objects traded have been altered to convey the impression of attributes or provenance currently popular with Western buyers: religious or ritual nature of the art, association with royalty, and antiquity (1994: 138). In addition to the cultural packaging of the art to enhance its 'utility' to Western understandings, the high commercial value and disappearing supply of what dealers and collectors classify as 'authentic' *objets d'art* (in accordance with its various definitions, and involving the construction of the very category 'African art') has, most interestingly, led to the expansion of the category to include different kinds of artefacts, such as 'colonial' figures, metal currency and various utility objects (for example, house ladders, wooden pestles, slingshots). In the case of the new market for slingshots, it can be traced to the entrepreneurial craftiness of an Italian collector who quietly went about buying them up, cornering the as-yet unannounced market for these objects. He then commissioned a photographic coffee-table book of his collection, which helped authorise this category of object as legitimately collectible. 'Scientific' proof is educed to show that the 'slingshots originated in the pre-colonial era … [so as] to create a market for the objects within the Western definition of "authenticity" in African art – i.e., which demands that the style has been conceived in an environment untainted by European influence' (1994: 115).

Although Bestor's and Steiner's market studies are unusual for their

interrogating the cultural attributes of both the supply and the demand as it impinges upon the immediate context of the commodity and marketplace in question, it might be remarked that in neither of these cases (and this is not intended as criticism) or in others purporting to accomplish similar global aims is the reader challenged into taking into account specifically capitalist marketing, which is, after all, the most forceful commoditiser and integrator of markets. Globalisation is rather seen to exert a connective and technical amplification over what are essentially mercantile exchanges of the sort that have their most precise correlates in prior ages (see, for example, Curtin 1984). The contrast between the conventional anthropological project to study marketplaces of the traditional sort[9] and an anthropology of markets that might actively include the factually more prevalent sort of marketplace – the kind that both carries exclusively branded commodities and might itself be branded – is evoked by the relative rarity in which one encounters an ethnographic analysis of a Walgreens or a Marks and Spencer or a Mall of America. The work of Daniel Miller (1998), James Watson (1997), Jackson et al. (2000) and some others are partial exceptions in this regard, but only partial because they tend to focus mainly on consumption, thereby accentuating the determinative capacities of consumers as against the intelligent meaningfulness of strategies of supply and the action-at-a-distance that characterises the sway over such marketplaces (Applbaum 2003). Demand, in other words, has by now been culturally figured, but supply has either been taken to be a consequence or a byproduct of demand, or has been relinquished to economics and political economy.[10]

The market model and its application

In so far as empirical and abstract markets represent different orders of phenomena, it would be impossible to argue their convergence unless one could show how the abstraction of the market principle is also being adopted as a model or blueprint for organising circulation and provisioning in places where a different pattern had prevailed. The market principle in this case emerges as a specific cultural theory or ideology rather than a universal truth.

To begin, it will be necessary to cite a definition of market economy to provide a baseline of what is commonly regarded as the target for analysis when one speaks of the adoption of the 'market model' (Carrier 1997). Selecting a definition itself raises the matter of separating between critical and normative perspectives. Anthropologists and other dissenters tend to focus on the market model's non-economic assumptions or factors – which are denied or played down by the model's literalist interpreters and supporters. The basic poles of the debate between the strict neoclassical economic understanding of markets as autonomous and its alternatives (key terms include moral economy,

institutionalism, embeddedness, political economy and market ideology) have been recapitulated in many places in and out of anthropology (for example, Carrier 1997; Dilley 1992; Friedland and Robertson 1990; Lie 1997). Economic anthropology's elemental orientation towards the contextual (political, social and cultural) understanding of economic behaviour, which dates at least to Bronislaw Malinowski's writings on the *kula* (1961 [1922]; see Strathern and Stewart chap. 14 supra), gives the discipline a natural toolkit[11] for considering the cultural specificity of the market model. However, as a conscious project it appears to have taken its inspiration from the work of a maverick economic historian, Karl Polanyi (1957a [1944]; see Isaac chap. 1 supra), who likewise inspired sociology to challenge neoclassical economic assumptions about the market. Polanyi's work, particularly his essay, 'The economy as instituted process' (1957b), has been blamed for sparking the hopelessly counterproductive formalist–substantivist debate (Hart 1990; see Wilk 1996 for a summary), and his account of 'the great transformation' to 'market society' has been strongly criticised (for example, Macfarlane 1978). However, it is probably true that Polanyi's depiction of the free-market ideal as a utopian liberal project was both original and inspirational to many subsequent writers who have questioned the wisdom of what Dilley (1992: 14) has described as 'the deployment of the market metaphor' around the world. I cite an abbreviated definition of Polanyi's market economy, as follows:

> A market economy is an economic system controlled, regulated and directed by markets alone; order in the production and distribution of goods is entrusted to this self-regulating mechanism … Self-regulation implies that all production is for sale on the market and that all income derives from such sales. Accordingly, there are markets for all elements of industry, not only for goods (always including services) but also for labor, land, and money … A further group of assumptions follows in respect to the state and its policy. Nothing must be allowed to inhibit the formation of markets … No measure or policy must be countenanced that would influence the action of these markets. Neither price, nor supply, nor demand must be fixed or regulated. (Polanyi 1957a [1944]: 68–9)

Polanyi also examined some of the human and moral assumptions of this market economy, such as that individuals will always attempt to maximise their monetary gains and so on. The abbreviated definition emphasises beliefs in (1) the autonomy of the market, (2) that all factors of production (including land and labour) be marketable and, therefore, (3) the relation of the state to the market should be characterised by laissez faire. Since (1) and (2) are most patently untrue for the types of markets anthropologists have traditionally studied, the normative proposal of (3) seems unnatural, even dangerous. As Carrier exhorts, 'Even though the Market model decrees that the market should exist outside of politics, the Market model itself does not. It is a self-definition with profound political correlates and consequences' (1997: 33).

Anglo-American triumphalism over the failure of the command-economy model in the former Soviet Union and its European satellites has brought the ideological component of the free-market model well into view. The renewed free-marketeering era that began during the Reagan and Thatcher administrations in the United States and Britain has snowballed into a forceful boast about the universal rationality and Good of the free market.[12] (Such is the tenor of much of the opposition to the World Trade Organisation.) It is amidst this recognition of the ideological force of the market model that anthropologists have undertaken to document and analyse ethnographically the institutionalisation or operationalisation of the model in the former command economies and in certain sectors of the Third World.

The key to pursuing the application of the market model to new environments lies in the recognition that '"The market" confronts people in diverse contexts and is not experienced as a purely economic phenomenon: it might appear as a rural privatization programme, advertisements for Western cigarettes, daily observations of growing inequalities in poverty and nouveau wealth, or the sudden visibility of prostitution' (Mandel and Humphrey 2002: 1). The most literal example of experimentation with market mechanisms as reported upon in the anthropological literature is Ellen Hertz's ethnography of the Shanghai stock market. While it is Hertz's contention that 'the hegemonic pressures of global capitalism have helped to bring China' to mimic the Western institution and open the Shanghai market (1998: 11), in the final analysis the institution reflects Chinese ways of distributing wealth, knowledge and power (see also Smart 1997).

> What distinguishes the Shanghai stock market from stock markets internationally – although this distinction is a matter of degree and not kind – is the fact that the interpretive framework through which Shanghainese read their stock market is firstly political, and secondly, if at all, 'economic.' We might say that the Shanghai market is primarily subject to a third form of fetishization, the fetishization of the state. (Hertz 1998: 23)

There is much originality and interest in Hertz's book beyond the above synopsis. However, it may nevertheless be one of anthropology's chief contributions to current political debates to stack up evidence of the idiosyncratic nature of the application of the market model in different locales, so as to bring self-consciousness and caution to the prevailing zeal for free marketeering. The highly balanced accounts of 'market cultures' in Hefner's collection of that name (1998) or Mandel and Humphrey's collection of 'ethnographies of postsocialism' (2002), which further the task undertaken by many of Dilley's contributors in 1992, invite us to attend to situations ranging from the moral sensitivities of traders in a Bulgarian sectoral market (Kaneff 2002) to the welfare of collective state farm livestock herders under

privatisation reforms in Mongolia's 'Age of the Market' (Sneath 2002), to the consequences for national cultural identity of the competition among West German publishers to capture the lucrative media market of the former GDR (Boyer 2001). The seamlessness of the continuum represented in such studies between marketplaces and market principle demonstrates once again the convergence in contemporary anthropology of these once separate spheres of inquiry.

Conclusion

With reference to specific examples of markets and market studies, I have argued that the conceptually-linked dichotomies of rural vs. urban, peasant vs. industrialised and, ultimately, local vs. global are less useful than they may have once been in the analysis of markets and marketing systems. These dichotomies, and others like them in economic anthropology (informal vs. formal, moral vs. amoral, embedded vs. disembedded, personalised vs. alienated, traditional vs. modern, and so on), can be held to signify as well the oppositional categories of empirical vs. abstract market. These two, I said, exist in reality on a continuum with each other and they are, in fact and in theory, converging.

The three frontiers of convergence in anthropological market studies I have cited – of trade concentration and vertical marketing integration, of the supply–market–demand complex as a unit of study, and of the application of the market principle (qua Western free-market model) to new places – by no means exhaust the catalogue of new areas of research to which anthropologists interested in markets have turned their attention. Three additional promising areas that come to mind include historical anthropological researches (for example, Carrier 1994; Larson and Harris 1995); gender in the market (for example, Seligmann 2001); and the political gradient of state–market relations when, under conditions of legislation and plans intended to administer and develop national economies, cultural contradictions and alternate forms of circulation emerge (for example, Clark 1988; Cohen and Dannhaeuser 2002).

Notes

1. Thus does Anthony Giddens define globalisation: 'the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa. This is a dialectical process because such local happenings may move in an obverse direction from the very distanciated relations that shape them' (1990: 64).
2. There is a varied literature on the topic of commodification or commoditisation. In this instance I am employing the term as Keith Hart (1987: 82) uses it, to mean 'greater reliance on markets' and manufactured commodities for household provisioning.
3. For an analysis of the relationship between built environment and shopping, see Sherry (1998).
4. This does not mean that everywhere women market traders are associated simply with economic marginalisation and inferior work status (see, for example, Alexander 1998; Babb

1989; Clark 1994), much less a loss of agency, as is often implied by world-systems discourse. Seligmann (2001: 4–5) helps clarify the general point about the conditions under which women become traders in many places: 'Women become vendors, rather than pursuing more lucrative occupations, for many reasons. For instance, men often monopolize or jealously guard employment in better-paid work; it is thus easier for women with little capital to pursue vending. Lineage and inheritance dynamics may also encourage women to enter marketing. Furthermore, jobs with more flexibility, like trading, enable women to combine their household and work responsibilities: as vendors, they may already have rights to certain kinds of crops, especially perishable food products within the household economy, that they can market. However, ambivalence may surround these women's economic activities if their incomes begin to surpass those of men and if they gain access to their own capital rather than depending on male kin to supply it. The economic fertility associated with capital accumulation is considered to be appropriate for men, not women, whose work should be primarily directed toward biological reproduction and economic reproduction of the household'. The key terms in this incomplete inventory are flexibility, perishable food products and employment not leading to capital accumulation, all of which evoke the economy of the peripheralised market.

5. *Vertical integration* is when a firm owns both the source of production ('upstream suppliers') and the distribution capabilities ('downstream buyers'). The result of such integration is a *vertical marketing system* defined, in turn, as a distribution channel structure in which 'producers, wholesalers, and retailers act as a unified system. One channel member, the channel captain, owns the others, or franchises them or has so much power that they all cooperate' (Kotler 2000: 505).
6. It is probably fair to say that all attempts to match production to consumption of a single commodity across geographical boundaries are godchildren of Sidney Mintz's (1985) magisterial book on sugar.
7. For a useful meditation on the subject of market as mirror or model, see Lindh de Montoya (1999).
8. Steiner's research was depicted and geographically extended in the film, *In and Out of Africa* (by Gabai Baare, Ilisa Barbash, Christopher Steiner, Lucien Taylor, Center for Visual Anthropology, University of Southern California).
9. That is, lively arenas 'hav[ing] much of the excitement of a fair, with friendships made, love affairs begun, and marriages arranged' (Plattner 1989: 171), not to say those redolent with fish smells.
10. One may isolate a third category that focuses upon strategic marketing at the point of sale, which is part of larger corporate marketing programmes. Creighton (1991, 1994) and Sherry et al. (2001) and contributors to Sherry (1998) are excellent examples of this kind of research.
11. And a motivation. Dilley observes: 'Anthropologists have often worked among people whose moral universes are conceived as *sui generis*. Their modes of social organization occupy a different order of organization from that of the state and the market. Both market and state are seen as factors external to the mode of social organization of their subjects, and these factors constitute agents of moral disintegration and outside interference' (1992: 7).
12. A case study of dispute over market rationalities and moralities between the United States and Japan can be found in Kalman Applbaum (1998).

References

Acheson, J. 1985. The social organization of the Maine lobster market. In *Markets and marketing* (ed.) S. Plattner. Lanham, Md.: Society for Economic Anthropology.

Alexander, J. 1998. Women traders in Javanese marketplaces: ethnicity, gender, and the entrepreneurial spirit. In *Market cultures: society and morality in the new Asian capitalisms* (ed.) R.W. Hefner. Boulder, Colo.: Westview.

Alvarez, R.R. 1994. Changing ideology in a transnational market: *Chile* and *Chileros* in Mexico and the U.S. *Human Organization* 53: 255–62.

Appadurai, A. 1996. *Modernity at large: cultural dimensions of globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
Applbaum, K. 1998. Rationality, morality and free trade: US–Japan trade relations in anthropological perspective. *Dialectical Anthropology* 28: 1–30.
Applbaum, K. 2000. Crossing borders: globalization as myth and charter in American transnational consumer marketing. *American Ethnologist* 27: 257–82.
Applbaum, K. 2003. *The marketing era: from professional practice to global provisioning*. New York: Routledge.
Babb, F.E. 1989. *Between field and cooking pot: the political economy of marketwomen in Peru*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
Bestor, T. 1999. Wholesale sushi: culture and commodity in Tokyo's Tsukiji market. In *Theorizing the city: the new urban anthropology reader* (ed.) S.M. Low. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
Bestor, T. 2001. Supply-side sushi: commodity, market, and the global city. *American Anthropologist* 103: 76–95.
Bird-David, N. 1997. Economies: a cultural–economic perspective. *International Social Science Journal* 49: 463–76.
Bohannan, P. and G. Dalton (eds) 1965. *Markets in Africa*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Books.
Bourdieu, P. 1984. *Distinction: a social critique of the judgement of taste*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
Boyer, D. 2001. Media markets, mediating labors, and the branding of East German culture at *Super Illu*. *Social Text* 19: 9–33.
Carrier, J. 1994. Alienating objects: the emergence of alienation in retail trade. *Man* 29: 359–80.
Carrier, J. (ed.) 1997. *Meanings of the market: the free market in Western culture*. Oxford: Berg.
Clark, G. (ed.) 1988. *Traders versus the state: anthropological approaches to unofficial economies*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview.
Clark, G. 1994. *Onions are my husband: survival and accumulation by West African market women*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Cohen, A. 1969. *Custom and politics in urban Africa*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Cohen, J.H. and N. Dannhaeuser (eds) 2002. *Economic development: an anthropological approach*. Walnut Creek, Cal.: AltaMira.
Creighton, M.R. 1991. Maintaining cultural boundaries in retailing: how Japanese department stores domesticate 'things foreign'. *Modern Asian Studies* 25: 675–709.
Creighton, M.R. 1994. 'Edutaining' children: consumer and gender socialization in Japanese marketing. *Ethnology* 33: 35–52.
Curtin, P.D. 1984. *Cross cultural trade in world history*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Dannhaeuser, N. 1985. Urban market channels under conditions of development: the case of India and the Philippines. In *Markets and marketing* (ed.) S. Plattner. Lanham, Md.: Society for Economic Anthropology.
Dannhaeuser, N. 1989. Marketing in developing urban areas. In *Economic anthropology* (ed.) S. Plattner. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Dannhaeuser, N. 1994. Concentration of trade and its urban impact under capitalism and socialism: former West Germany (Hassfurt) and East Germany (Hildburghausen) compared. *Urban Studies* 31: 79–97.
Dannhaeuser, N. 1996. Trade concentration in Hassfurt (Germany) and Dagupan City (Philippines): globalization or localization? *Journal of Developing Societies* 12: 175–90.
de Montoya, L. 1999. Market as mirror or model: how traders reconfigure economic and social transactions in a rural economy. *Ethnos* 64: 57–81.
Dilley, R. (ed.) 1992. *Contesting markets: market ideology, imagery and discourse*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
Finan, T.J. 1988. Market relationships and market performance in northeast Brazil. *American Ethnologist* 15: 694–708.
Friedland, R. and A.F. Robertson (eds) 1990. *Beyond the marketplace: rethinking economy and society*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
Gereffi, G. and M. Korzeniewicz (eds) 1994. *Commodity chains and global capitalism*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger.

Giddens, A. 1990. *The consequences of modernity*. Cambridge: Polity.
Hart, K. 1987. Commoditisation and the standard of living. In *The standard of living* (ed.) G. Hawthorn. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Hart, K. 1990. The idea of economy: six modern dissenters. In *Beyond the marketplace* (eds) R. Friedland and A.F. Robertson. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
Hefner, R.W. (ed.) 1998. *Market cultures: society and morality in the new Asian capitalisms*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview.
Hertz, E. 1998. *The trading crowd: an ethnography of the Shanghai stock market*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Jackson, P., M. Lowe, D. Miller and F. Mort (eds) 2000. *Commercial cultures: economies, practices, spaces*. Oxford: Berg.
Kaneff, D. 2002. The shame and pride of market activity: morality, identity and trading in postsocialist rural Bulgaria. In *Markets and moralities* (eds) R. Mandel and C. Humphrey. Oxford: Berg.
Kapchan, D. 1996. *Gender on the market: Moroccan women and the revoicing of tradition*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
Kopytoff, I. 1986. The cultural biography of things: commoditization as process. In *The social life of things: commodities in cultural perspective* (ed.) A. Appadurai. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,
Kotler, P. 2000. *Marketing management*. New Delhi: Prentice-Hall.
Larson, B. and O. Harris (eds) 1995. *Ethnicity, markets, and migration in the Andes: at the crossroads of history and anthropology*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
Lessinger, J. 1988. Trader vs. developer: the market relocation issue in an Indian city. In *Traders versus the state* (ed.) G. Clark. Boulder, Colo.: Westview.
Lie, J. 1992. The concept of mode of exchange. *American Sociological Review* 57: 508–23.
Lie, J. 1997. Sociology of markets. *Annual Review of Sociology* 23: 341–60.
Lien, M. 1997. *Marketing and modernity*. Oxford: Berg.
Macfarlane, A. 1978. *The origins of English individualism*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
Malinowski, B. 1961 (1922). *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. New York: E.P. Dutton.
Mandel, E. 1972. *Late capitalism*. London: New Left Books.
Mandel, R. and C. Humphrey (eds) 2002. *Markets and moralities: ethnographies of postsocialism*. Oxford: Berg.
Marcus, G.E. 1998. *Ethnography through thick and thin*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Matejowsky, T. 2002. Globalization, privatization, and public space in the provincial Philippines. In *Economic development: an anthropological approach* (eds) J.H. Cohen and N. Dannhaeuser. Walnut Creek, Cal.: AltaMira.
Mayer, E. and M. Glave 1999. *Alguito para ganar* (a little something to earn): profits and losses in peasant economies. *American Ethnologist* 26: 344–69.
Miller, D. 1998. *A theory of shopping*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
Mintz, S.W. 1985. *Sweetness and power: the place of sugar in modern history*. New York: Penguin.
Nash, J. (ed.) 1993. *Crafts in the world market: the impact of global exchange on middle American artisans*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
Plattner, S. 1989. Markets and marketplaces. In *Economic anthropology* (ed.) S. Plattner. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Polanyi, K. 1957a (1944). *The great transformation*. Boston, Mass.: Beacon.
Polanyi, K. 1957b. The economy as instituted process. In *Trade and market in the early empires* (eds) K. Polanyi, C.M. Arensberg and H.W. Pearson. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press.
Rosenbaum, B. and L. Goldin 1997. New exchange processes in the international market: the re-making of Maya artisan production in Guatemala. *Museum Anthropology* 21: 72–82.
Sahlins, M. 1976. *Culture and practical reason*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Schwimmer, B. 1979. Market structure and social organization in a Ghanaian marketing system. *American Ethnologist* 6: 682–701.
Seligmann, L.J. 2001. Introduction: mediating identities and marketing wares. In *Women traders in cross-cultural perspective* (ed.) L. Seligmann. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Sherry, J.F., Jr. (ed.) 1998. *Servicescapes: the concept of place in contemporary markets*. Lincolnwood, Ill.: NTC Books.
Sherry, J.F., Jr., R.V. Kozinets, D. Storm, A. Duhachek, K. Nuttavuthisit, B. DeBerry-Spence 2001. Being in the zone: staging retail theater at ESPN Zone Chicago. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 30: 465–510.
Slater, D. 1993. Going shopping: markets, crowds and consumption. In *Cultural reproduction* (ed.) C. Jenks. London: Routledge.
Smart, A. 1997. Oriental despotism and sugar-coated bullets: representations of the market in China. In *Meanings of the market* (ed.) J. Carrier. Oxford: Berg.
Sneath, D. 2002. Mongolia in the 'age of the market': pastoral land-use and the development discourse. In *Markets and moralities* (eds) R. Mandel and C. Humphrey. Oxford: Berg.
Steiner, C.B. 1994. *African art in transit*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Trager, L. 1981. Customers and creditors: variations in economic personalism in a Nigerian marketing system. *Ethnology* 20: 133–46.
Watson, J.L. (ed.) 1997. *Golden Arches East: McDonald's in East Asia*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Wilk, R.R. 1996. *Economies and cultures: foundations of economic anthropology*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview.

18 One-way economic transfers

Robert C. Hunt

Human economies can be characterised as producing, using and allocating an enormous number of objects. In production, natural persons travel to where resources are, extract them, usually process the resources into products (tools, a butchered carcass, pots), carry some of that product back to home base and allocate some products to others. All human societies are characterised by the fact that the consumer or user of a product is not necessarily, or even usually, the producer of it. This applies to members of a household, where children and the sick are (for the moment) consuming but not producing, as well as to those who live and work in an industrial economy.

Much of our thinking about economies has focused on allocation, or when, how and why products move from one person to another. Many would label this sequence of transactions 'exchange'. Two obvious kinds of exchange are purchase and sale, and gift exchange. If by exchange we mean that there are (minimally) two parties transacting (call them A and B), then in an exchange an object X moves from A to B, and another object Y moves from B to A, *and* all parties concerned claim that the two moves are linked as a set.

In purchase and sale, A has tomatoes for sale and B has money. Tomatoes move from A to B, money moves from B to A, and everybody agrees that the tomatoes and money are exchanged for each other. The timing of the two moves can be nearly instantaneous or can be delayed. When this purchase and sale involves money, a price set by supply and demand, and willing buyers and sellers who may well be in no other social relationship, we call it market exchange. When economists write about exchange it is this kind of exchange that they focus on. There is no doubt that the phenomenon is very widespread and very important. There are some purchases that are not made according to the market principle (for example, the price is not set by supply and demand, as in a command economy), but we know far less about them. They are nevertheless purchase and sale exchanges.

Gift exchanges occur when A moves an object X to B, and B moves an object Y to A, A and B are in an ongoing social relationship and all parties agree that an exchange has taken place. There is no price, and often no money. Anthropologists have paid a great deal of attention to the gift (see Yan chap. 15 supra), economists less so.[1]

Because human societies have a division of labour such that members need

to consume what they do not produce, there must be a way to allocate products so that individuals' needs can be met. Exchanges are an obvious way to do this. Market exchanges are very prominent in agrarian and industrial economies, and gift exchanges in horticultural economies (but for a more nuanced view, see Carrier 1992). Other chapters in this book discuss these kinds of exchanges.

But there are other kinds of transaction found in every human society, wherein an object X is moved from A to B *without* a counter-move of an object from B to A. By definition these are not economic exchanges. One type is where economic wealth is traded for prestige or power; another type is where goods with economic content are shifted, but there is no exchange of any kind. From the economic point of view these are one-way transfers. It has been proposed that these one-way economic transfers are interesting, occur in every kind of human society and economy, are often economically important, but have received very little attention (Hunt 2000, 2002a; Woodburn 1998; see also Pryor 1977). This chapter is about one-way economic transfers without exchange as one form of allocation in economies.

It is useful to try to separate out those objects and interactions which are economic from those that are not. (If we cannot do this, then there is no possible way to relate economic to other phenomena.) There are two major approaches to this, the economising approach and the exchange approach. The intense literature on the formalist–substantivist problem illustrates the economising position (see Burling 1962; LeClair and Schneider 1968; see Isaac chap. 1 supra). The problems with the economising approach are that all decisions that involve economising are included, with no distinctions of economy, kinship, recreation, sexuality and the like, and that not all acts are the product of rational decision making.

Many would say that the economic is revealed in exchange, that the economic value of a good is what someone is willing to give up in order to acquire it. There are two problems with this approach. The first is that it assumes exchange, and the purpose of this chapter is to examine transactions that do not form parts of exchanges. The second problem is that it leaves out of the picture economic production the results of which are not subsequently transacted.

I propose that we focus on production instead of allocation for our definition of economic. Many objects have economic content, and by economic content I mean that time, labour, energy and resources have been expended in the making of that object.[2] Producing that object may or may not have involved rational decisions about uses of scarce resources. That object might be allocated to another, and that transaction might be an exchange, in which case the relative value of the objects exchanged can be examined. In transfers, on the other hand, as in making-for-self, there is no handy way to

examine exchange value. I therefore choose to anchor the domain of the economic in production, not decision making or allocation.

I suggest that one-way economic transfers exist in all societies, that on occasion they are of great importance for people, that they are of economic significance, that they are not economic *exchanges*, and that they merit much more of our attention than they have received. The reader should be aware that there has been far less attention paid to one-way economic transfers than to exchanges, and in consequence there is much less known about them. A better understanding will have to await the collection of more case studies than we now have.

We have a number of partially-understood examples of one-way economic transfer, and I shall use a few of them to illustrate the phenomenon. In a subsequent section I shall suggest some dimensions that seem relevant to these examples, and begin to grope towards some generalisations.

Household pooling

All humans are born helpless, none is expected to do much work before the age of four or so, and many are not expected to do much work until they have reached ten years or more. In the meantime they must be provided with liquids, food, shelter and clothing (if there is any). In the early stages of life the vast majority of humans are members of a household along with primary relatives, some of whom are adults. Everywhere the adults are supposed to provide for these helpless young. Much of what is provided has economic content, and it is needed to rear these children. (Later the older children may well contribute economically to the household.) These transactions are one-way economic transfers, not exchanges. Objects with economic content, often produced by the adults in the household, are moved to and consumed by the children. There is no move of objects with economic content back to the adults.

Much later in life, when the children in the scenario of the preceding paragraph are adults, and the former adults are old and helpless, it is often the case that some of those children will be responsible for taking care of them. It is tempting to regard this as part of a (delayed) exchange, but it is in most cases wrong. In part it is wrong because not all the children are expected (or desired) to provide the goods. In many societies it is the daughters only (in one region of South Asia it is the sons' wives; see Lamb 2000) who provide the caring. If it were an exchange, then all surviving children who were recipients would be expected to be active in the care. Instead it is usually one person, and that person is usually female and is usually a daughter. I therefore conclude that the transactions are part of a social relationship, with some kinds of reciprocities built in, but are not the standard delayed economic exchange.

Forager food-sharing

Some foragers live in small camps, and acquire undomesticated species for use.[3] There are usually between twenty and forty people resident in the camp, along with several visitors. These people include infants, children, women and men, some of whom may be sick or incapacitated. A hunter, or a hunting party, will often consume the meat of small animals on the spot where they are killed. On the other hand, should a large animal be killed, the procedures are quite different. The meat from large animals is shared with all members of the camp. Typically, the carcass is butchered into large segments at the kill site and carried back to the camp.

The large segments of the carcass are then cut into smaller pieces by one person who is responsible for the job (who may or may not be the person credited with the kill). Once cut, the pieces are moved in such a way that everybody in camp gets a piece. And the rule is that everybody gets an equivalent piece. Moreover, everybody is entitled to an opinion about whether or not their piece, or their neighbour's piece, is the right size. These opinions can be voiced loudly and insistently, and they must be taken seriously.[4]

The hunters are almost always male and almost always in the prime of life. Children, pregnant women and the feeble old do not hunt and are not responsible for butchering and allocation. It must be the case that a male starts as a non-hunter, becomes a hunter as he matures, and then (if he lives long enough) ceases with advancing age to be an active hunter. Therefore, those who kill large animals are never from all the categories of person in a camp, have been non-hunters in the past and are potentially non-hunters in the future. And remember that, because shares are equal, the person credited with the kill does not receive any more meat than anybody else (and may in fact receive less; Hawkes 2001).

It should be clear that meat sharing in foraging societies is a case of one-way economic transfer, not of exchange. There are categories of person (females, in this case) who have rights to receive this meat and who would never be in a position to be the hunter of meat. There is so far no sign of systematic exchange of something other than meat with a hunter. There is no sign of a delayed return, of meat or of anything else. It fits the picture: A (the butcher) moves X (meat) to all others in camp, and nothing of economic content comes back in a linked transaction. The meat has economic content, and the allocation of the meat is a one-way transfer, not an exchange.

Inheritance

In agrarian and industrial economies there can be considerable economic assets which are held as property by individuals. Some of these assets are transferred to living persons upon the death of the owner. Objects that can be devolved include land, facilities (for example, mines or factories), buildings,

domesticated animals (horses, camels, sheep, and so on), household furnishings (furniture, pictures), jewellery, equity instruments (stocks, bonds) and cash.

In these cases A is the owner of the objects, X are the objects with economic content, and upon the death of A they become the property of B (or a set of Bs). There are usually formal public rules about how the estate of the deceased is to be partitioned. Wives, children or siblings may be privileged, and many of the participants think that at least some of the assets should be channelled to the 'rightful heirs' rather than given away to 'strangers'. The estate may be held together, or it may be split into equal, or unequal, parts.

In this case, there are objects with economic content that are shifted from A to B, but there is no counter-shift of objects with economic content from B to A. B is designated as a (potential or legal) recipient because of general rules (about, for example, kinship and marriage). B is not usually a recipient because of prior economic interaction with A. One may, in fact, inherit from some distant relative one has never even met.

I conclude that inheritance is not an economic exchange. It may involve substantial assets with economic content. Once inherited the assets become the personal property of the heirs. Inheritance is therefore a one-way economic transfer (usually an inter-generational one), not an economic exchange.

Endowments

Old-World agrarian states from India to Europe have endowments, often owned by foundations.[5] These are based upon assets or bundles of assets, given by a person or a family. The assets are legally separated from the donor and given in perpetuity to another social entity, such as a church, temple or college. This second social entity now owns the assets, and is supposed to manage the assets to accomplish the purposes of the donors. These purposes can include charity, education, research, support of a charitable institution, and performance of ritual, including saying prayers for the souls of the departed.

For a foundation to work in secular time it must have a perpetual social organisation of some sort, with officers who can legitimately make decisions about investing and spending the endowment. The assets may need to be managed, and the spending of the income from the assets must be managed. Often the officers of the organisation are self-replicating, in that they alone can elect new officers. The original donors and their descendants are not supposed to have any control over the foundation, including its endowment.

The transaction is for A to shift X (with economic content) to an entity B. There is no linked shift of Y with economic content from B to A, so it is not an economic exchange. There are, occasionally, positive economic consequences for A's shift of assets to B, including some tax relief (in the twentieth-century UK and US), and considerable prestige (which arguably has

no economic content). There may be claims that such endowments by A in this life have an effect upon the soul of A after A dies.

The question of a return, especially an economic return, in a future life is a challenging one. Spiro (1966) has analysed Burmese villager giving to temples and monks as an investment in economic condition for a future life. The Burmese believe in reincarnation, that every human soul will return in multiple futures. According to the local belief system, one may invest today to increase one's merit in this life, and higher merit in this life translates into a better material (and otherwise) condition in the next life.

From one point of view, that of a single life, the Burman's shift of material assets (to monks, say) is a one-way economic transfer. From the Burmese point of view, however, this shift of assets from A to B will affect the next life of A in the future, so that it begins to look like an economic exchange. One would like to know more about the connection between the two As (that in the present life and the one of the next life), and the identity of B. One would also like to investigate whether the various parties would recognise this as an economic exchange.

The more general point has to do with how material the As and Bs need to be. Souls of ancestors are often said to be angry, to be causing illness and bad luck. In some societies one must interact with the souls of the ancestors, and that interaction often looks like an economic exchange. We as outside observers need to give more thought to how we analyse these local claims of exchanges with entities that we cannot see.

The assets shifted as endowments can be very considerable indeed, and are a loss of assets for A and for the family and heirs of A. The activities of these foundations can be of major importance for the economy of agrarian and industrial civilisations. They are, then, a one-way economic transfer, and they can be important for the entire economy.

Theft

Theft is a way to acquire assets, and sometimes substantial assets. Assets move from A to B, and there is no counter-transfer that links the two as an economic exchange or, at times, as any kind of exchange. It is sometimes the case that A will in turn try to steal assets from B. Apparently stealing of horses among the tribes on the Great Plains of the United States was so structured (Ewers 1955). Extortion and banditry may well be other cases.

Little attention has been paid to the transactions involved in such interactions, and they have not entered the anthropological literature as a major subject for discussion. It seems clear that they are not cases of economic exchange, that the assets involved often have economic content and may be substantial, and that they are likely to be one-way economic transfers. They are, of course, hard to study because of the potential for violence, and because

for at least some of the parties involved the transactions are unsought, unwelcome and illegal (or at least illegitimate), and because they are also often secret.

Gift to host

A transaction that challenges analysis is the gift to the host in the United States.[6] There is almost no discussion of the transaction in the literature, and my efforts to quiz friends, colleagues and students about the matter has turned up standardised behaviour but neither articulated rules nor folk exegesis. These gifts have minor economic content (for the US middle class), but have a firm structure and lead us to much wider fields of enquiry.

When one is invited to a private (rather than public) dinner party at the home of someone, it is expected that the guest will arrive bearing a small gift. There is no consistent name for this gift in the United States (some call it a hostess gift, most claim there is no name for it). If one arrives without one (because, say, one has been in meetings all day and had no opportunity to acquire the gift), one has to apologise for arriving empty handed, for 'not bringing something'. Not apologising under the circumstances is noted and remembered by the host. Apologies are always accepted the first time. However, if there are multiple occurrences then the relationship is very likely to be changed.

The objects that are acceptable as gifts are quite limited. Flowers, chocolates or a bottle of wine are standard. If flowers are presented they will immediately be put in a vase and displayed. Chocolates may well be served at the end of the meal. The bottle of wine may or may not be opened and consumed during the meal.

Some objects are not appropriate. Food that could be part of the meal itself is not welcomed (perhaps because it is an intrusion into the construction of the meal). Arriving with a case of wine would not be appropriate. Arriving with pet food, or jewellery or a snowmobile, would be wildly inappropriate. The quality of the chocolates or wine is also at issue. Chocolates in the form of a handful of ordinary candy bars would be frowned upon. Chocolates should be of high quality and should be packaged in a good-looking special box. If the meal is expected to be of high quality, arriving with a very cheap bottle of what, in the United States, is called 'jug wine' would present an opportunity to question the taste and motives of the guest. Similarly, arriving with a very rare and expensive bottle of wine would, in most circumstances, be thought of as approaching too much.

As a guest, one thinks about the gift that one arrives with. It should be the right kind of thing (flowers, chocolates or wine are obvious; if anything else is to be given, it must receive careful consideration). Also, the thing itself should be the right size and quality. There are a number of parameters to be

considered, including how well one knows the host and hostess, how often one has been there, what if anything the party is celebrating, how large the party will be, and the history of the exchanges of such gifts between the parties. Continued invitations between the parties depend upon the correct handling of these gifts. They must be given, be appropriate, or be apologised for if the relationship is to endure.

The American adults I have discussed this with (most of them in a university environment in the northeastern part of the country) all know the rules, all follow the rules and, until I raised the issue, claimed to have not thought about the rules or the system. It is very hard to get people to take an interest in the phenomenon or to provide an exegesis.

What kind of a transaction is involved? There is a shift of an object of economic content (the gift, X) from the guest (A) to the host (B). Upon arrival one is asked to cross the outer threshold. There is a space where one is greeted and takes off one's outdoor coat. If it is a dedicated space it is usually called an 'entry hall'. This is the space where the gift is presented, and accepted. In a different space the hosts present drinks and something to eat which are consumed by both hosts and guests. Then dinner is served, usually in yet a different space. In these two phases the hosts shift objects with economic content (the drinks and food, Y) from B to A.

A few Americans will claim that the gift and the meal are an economic exchange. Most will resist that claim, as I do. There is an exchange in which the diners participate. Dinners are exchanged for dinners. These are clearly seen as linked events, and people 'count' dinners exchanged and remember the count. It is my opinion that the gift is not part of an economic exchange for the dinner party. It is, rather, a one-way economic transfer.

It is not clear what the meaning or function of this gift is. It may have something to do with respect, or with recognising the host's activity. It may have something to do with displaying proper guest behaviour.

It may well be an example of something much more widespread. A student from the People's Republic of China was accepted for graduate study in my department. I met him for the first time after he arrived, and at that interview he presented me with a wooden case containing two *cloisonné* vases. It was a first for me and I was confused. I do not accept 'presents' from students I do not know well. It smacked of a bribe. This kind of one-way economic transfer was, however, obligatory for this student from China. It was not a bribe, but a sign of respect, and perhaps a signal that he would work hard.

It is sometimes the case that major exchanges are preceded by a smaller 'gift'. In the *kula* transactions in Milne Bay (see Strathern and Stewart chap. 14 supra) armbands and necklaces are exchanged with formal partners. Armbands move in one direction around a large circle, and necklaces move in the opposite direction. The partner is presented with minor gifts, likely to be

food and a stone axe (Malinowski 1922: 354). If they are accepted by the partner it means that a major *kula* valuable will be forthcoming. Middleton (2003) reports a parallel case, of seagoing traders presenting gifts of Chinese porcelain to their Swahili merchant partners when they arrive.

These gifts are perhaps a form of speculative investment, an attempt to produce an effect. That effect is by no means certain, which makes the gift giving speculative. It is a one-way transfer of an object with economic content. You hope that it will lead to substantial trades, but there is no guarantee. It would seem to be a one-way economic transfer, not an exchange.

There are many instances of such gifts around the world. Perhaps the distinction between such gifts and bribes is an uncertain one. 'Bribery' is a concept (and a crime) in all Old-World states, and the participants are subject to possible sanctions. It is also very widespread in occurrence. Most bribes can be seen as secret economic exchanges. But there are instances in which the bribed does not respond, either by inability to perform or because someone else paid more and got the contract or permission. In this latter case the net result is that no economic exchange took place, even though exchange was the intention of the briber. These end up looking like one-way economic transfers, not exchanges, although perhaps they did not start that way from the point of view of the donor.

This topic is one that is hard to analyse. One needs more data on what actually happens, but some of the events are secret, often illegal, and extremely hard to observe. Before we can do a detailed analysis of the phenomenon we need those data. Once that is accomplished, then we may be able to apply the exchange and one-way transfer concepts to them, and see if we can make sense of the events with those concepts.

Charity, hospitality, sacrifice

There are a number of other transactions that seem to fit the one-way transfer rather than the exchange set. Charity is one of them. Old-World states all institutionalise charity, the shifting of objects of (small) economic content from the relatively well-to-do to the 'poor'. The 'poor' may be poor because of vows of poverty (monks in Buddhism and Christianity), because of natural disasters (floods, droughts, epidemics) or man-made ones (wars, riots), or because of chronic poverty. Islam, Buddhism and Christianity have systems for collecting and dispensing charity. Students and colleagues have often said to me that there is an exchange involved, for the donor achieves a sense of satisfaction from the transaction. Two points need to be made. First, the recipient does not shift anything economic to the donor. Second, the sense of satisfaction is an intra-psychic event, not a transaction. The suggestion that the satisfaction makes this an exchange seems a good example of the dominance of an exchange model in thinking about such events. It seems clear

to this observer that these are one-way economic transfers, not economic exchanges.

Hospitality is the offering of food, shelter and protection to others, who may be strangers, often for a limited time period. There is clearly the shift of objects with economic content from A to B, and there is equally clearly no counter-shift economically. The contrasting set would be paying an establishment for providing a room and meals, which is clearly an economic exchange. Hospitality would seem to be a case of one-way economic transfer.

Sacrifice to the supernatural is an intriguing set of events. If one looks only at the tangible parties, then the sacrificers are offering objects with economic content (the fatted calf), and getting nothing economic in return. But all such religious sacrifices involve intangible beings (spirits, saints, gods, God) who are the target for and perhaps the recipients of the sacrifice. In many cultures these intangible beings are believed to consume the objects sacrificed and to have agency. Some of these are probably economic exchanges, for the intangible beings are believed to provide good fortune in production or trade, apparently in return for the sacrifice. But if there is no such economic response from the spirits, then the transactions begin to look like one-way economic transfers.

Dimensions

Although little is known about one-way economic transfers, we can begin to outline some of the dimensions which structure them. First it appears to be true that no outsider can decide whether any two transactions are linked. Even if they occur together in space and time they may not be linked. The first transaction may be the end of one exchange and the second one the start of another. We must, then, know what the participants think about the transactions. We need local knowledge.

Another dimension is initiative, or which party or parties can take the initiative in the transaction. For some events the sequence is quite clear. In the case of household pooling, initiative may lie with any party. In charity the initiative for some forms lies with the recipient not the donor, while in other forms the initiative lies with the donor.

A third dimension is the location of the decision to shift the object with economic content. The donor has the asset and the donor may or may not have a right to refuse to provide it. In the case of forager meat-sharing, the donor can be harassed for refusing to provide, and will be sanctioned for so refusing. In some cultural systems inheritance is rigidly specified, such that the donor has no right to refuse. In other cultural systems the decision is firmly held by the donor.

Another dimension concerns sanctions for non-performance. Since most of these transactions do not rise to the level of a formal contract, the formal

sanction systems do not appear to be relevant. There are sanctions applied in the case of stinginess in forager meat-sharing, although we have no full descriptions. In the cases of not giving the 'gift' prior to an event, the sanction may be that the path is not opened, and subsequent transactions do not occur, or may occur differently.

Summary and conclusion

Humans make a large number of things, and these things are very often shifted from one person to another, and then to still others. Most of this shifting of things is contained within the concept of exchange, and these exchanges are important for the individuals involved, for the economies where they take place, and for the species as a whole. My point is that there are some shifts of things which are *not* exchanges, and we ought to recognise this difference.

For lack of a better term I have called these 'one-way economic transfers'. I hope to have shown that these one-way transfers occur in every human society, are not exchanges, do involve the economy, and are important. These events have been largely invisible in the conceptual apparatus of the economic anthropologist, and therefore largely ignored in the literature. If this line of reasoning is accepted the subject matter of economic anthropology is thereby enlarged.

Notes

1. Mauss (1990 [1927]) and Gregory (1982) are two major treatises wherein gift exchange is contrasted with commodity exchange. Polanyi (1957; see Isaac chap. 1 supra) and Bohannan (1963) write of three kinds of exchanges: reciprocity, redistribution and market.
2. One appropriately asks about services. Surely the phrase 'goods and services', so commonly used in industrial economies, means that objects are not the only kind of thing with economic importance. A service would seem to be a performance. Some of these performances require a prior investment (time, labour, perhaps resources and energy) on the part of the performer. Sometimes these performances are part of an exchange (as with an accountant or doctor, or a theatrical production). There are certainly some performances where there is no return economic transfer. Services are a misty category, with highly uncertain boundaries. Even so, readers who are so disposed may read my 'objects' as 'goods and services'.
3. The case developed here owes much to the work of Lee (1979, 1993) for the San and to Woodburn (see 1998) for the Hadza. See also the collection edited by Wenzel, Hovelsrud-Broda and Kishigami (2000).
4. This system of sharing of food differentiates *Homo* from all other primates, and is a significant component of being human (Hunt 2002b; Rose and Marshall 1996; Wrangham et al. 1999).
5. There were New-World agrarian states (Monte Alban, Teotihuacan, Aztec, Classic Maya, the Inka and their predecessors). I am not aware of any endowments or foundations among them.
6. In what follows, my data come entirely from adult middle class (mostly) Americans, often in a university context. I do not know how widely these findings can be generalised in US society.

References

Bohannan, P.J. 1963. *Social anthropology*. New York: Holt Rinehart & Winston.

Burling, R. 1962. Maximization theories and the study of economic anthropology. *American Anthropologist* 64: 802–21.

Carrier, J.G. 1992. The gift in theory and practice in Melanesia: a note on the centrality of gift exchange. *Ethnology* 31: 185–93.
Ewers, J.C. 1955. *The horse in Blackfoot Indian culture*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution.
Gregory, C. 1982. *Gifts and commodities*. London: Academic Press.
Hawkes, K. 2001. Is meat the hunter's property? Big game, ownership, and explanations of hunting and sharing. In *Meat-eating and human evolution* (eds) C. Stanford and H.T. Bunn. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Hunt, R.C. 2000. Forager food sharing economy: transfers and exchanges. In *The social economy of sharing: resource allocation and modern hunter-gatherers* (eds) G. Wenzel, G. Hovelsrud-Broda and N. Kishigumi. Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology.
Hunt, R.C. 2002a. Economic transfers and exchanges: concepts for describing allocations. In *Theory in economic anthropology* (ed.) J. Ensminger. Walnut Creek, Cal.: AltaMira Press.
Hunt, R.C. 2002b. A foraging revolution? Presented at the 9th Conference on hunting and gathering societies. Edinburgh, September.
Lamb, S. 2000. *White saris and sweet mangoes: aging, gender, and body in North India*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
LeClair, E.E., Jr., and H.K. Schneider 1968. Some further theoretical issues. In *Economic anthropology: readings in theory and method* (eds) E.E. LeClair, Jr. and H.K. Schneider. New York: Holt Rinehart & Winston.
Lee, R.B. 1979. *The !Kung San: men, women and work in a foraging society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Lee, R.B. 1993. *The Dobe Ju/'hoansi*. (2nd ed.) Fort Worth, Tex.: Harcourt Brace College.
Malinowski, B. 1922. *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. New York: E.P. Dutton.
Mauss, M. 1990 (1927). *The gift*. New York: W.W. Norton.
Middleton, J. 2003. Merchants: an essay in historical ethnography. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* (n.s.) 9: 509–26.
Polanyi, K. 1957. The economy as instituted process. In *Trade and markets in the early empires* (eds) K. Polanyi, C. Arensberg and H. Pearson. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press.
Pryor, F.L. 1977. *The origins of the economy: a comparative study of distribution in primitive and peasant economies*. New York: Academic Press.
Rose, L.M. and F. Marshall 1996. Meat eating, hominid sociality, and home bases revisited. *Current Anthropology* 37: 307–38.
Spiro, M. 1966. Buddhism and economic action in Burma. *American Anthropologist* 68: 1163–73.
Wenzel, G.W., G. Hovelsrud-Broda and N. Kishigami (eds) 2000. *The social economy of sharing: resource allocation and modern hunter-gatherers*. Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology.
Woodburn, J. 1998. 'Sharing is not a form of exchange': an analysis of property-sharing in immediate-return hunter-gatherer societies. In *Property relations: renewing the anthropological tradition* (ed.) C.M. Hann. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Wrangham, R., J.H. Jones, G. Laden, D. Pilbeam and N.L. Conklin-Brittain 1999. The raw and the stolen: cooking and the ecology of human origins. *Current Anthropology* 40: 567–94.

PART IV

INTEGRATIONS

Introduction

I said in the Introduction to this handbook that economic anthropologists, like anthropologists generally, are concerned with contexts and linkages. While this concern is apparent throughout this handbook, it is the specific focus of Part IV. Chapters here consider the relationship between economic life and important areas that might be considered extrinsic to it: culture, gender, religion, ethnicity and, finally, people's relationships with their natural environs. Taken together, these chapters show how economic activity cannot be understood without careful attention to its relationships with other areas of social life.

19 Culture and economy

Michael Blim

Much depends upon our values. People have values, notions of what is good or worthy and what is bad or unworthy of human life, regarding the most fundamental questions of existence. Our choices, our actions in the world, are guided by them. They are the ultimate ends against which we measure our actions (see Alexander chap. 28, Graeber chap. 27 infra).

Values point towards appropriate actions. For instance, suppose we value human beings leading long, disease-free lives (however we may define this). We could then proceed to evaluate goals and courses of action in light of the degree to which they advance that which we hold dear. Some goals would be appropriate, and some would not. In this case, perhaps the goal to be rich, for instance, may be less relevant to our value of long, disease-free life than the goal of universal health care.

Let us take another case. Suppose we value living without experiencing physical violence. We can then proceed to evaluate our goals. Is retaining the use of force as a foreign policy option consonant with our values? Is keeping a standing army compatible? Is the death penalty appropriate? Is corporal punishment in schools fitting? On the other hand, if we think about goals that would enhance our abilities to live in a violence-free world, we might look at courses of action that lessened the frequency and impact of violence in our lives. We might consider teaching children peaceful approaches to conflict resolution. Or we may want to argue that lowering the degree of poverty and economic inequality would lower rates of crime that include physical force and violence.

The relationships among values, goals and actions are reciprocal. Considerations of a goal or action invoke our values, and vice versa. All three change as the conditions of our lives change. Thus, values are not some fixed essence, like the North Star, by which we guide ourselves. They are more like maps we use crossing the rough and changing terrain of everyday living. Embodied in actions, they comprise culture.

Economies are no different. They depend upon our values, and thus are culturally bound. The question of whether values came to shape our economies or whether economies shaped our values is one that generated significant controversy in the nineteenth century. Karl Marx, the materialist, was convinced that human activity to reproduce its existence shaped human outlooks and ultimately what people believe. Max Weber, the idealist seeking

to contest Marx, insisted that people's values shaped their economic actions (see Coleman chap. 21 infra), though he conceded that economic activities, once routinised and patterned into systems of action, exercised a rather tyrannical normative force on people's actions. Émile Durkheim, the exacting moralist, was certain that economies themselves derived from the expanded reproduction of society, itself the original good. Thus, the powerful norms demanding social cohesion governed and gave direction to economies.

While it may not matter much which came first, economies or culture, it is important to keep the interconnection in mind, for changing one often changes the other. Perhaps the causative powers of economies are easier to assimilate, as we have lived through so many of them. Ours is a world of perpetual economic revolution. From one century to the next, we have experienced technological revolutions, transportation revolutions, communicative revolutions, and each of these revolutions has begotten whole genealogies of revolutions. From manual labour, Yankee clippers and the telegraph in the nineteenth century to machine labour, steam ships and the telephone in the first half of the twentieth century, and robotics and computers, overnight air freight and instantaneous internet connection in the second half of the twentieth century, we have moved a long way in 150 years. These changes, taken separately and in combination, have affected how we act and what we believe.

Moreover, the growth in the size and complexity of economic organisations has created a new frame of reference for human action. Enormous bureaucratic hierarchies composed of firms and states command our labours, collect our taxes, redistribute economic surpluses, produce and distribute the world's goods. Consider that the world's 1000 largest companies produce four-fifths of the world's industrial output directly or indirectly (The Economist 2000: 21). Of the world's largest 100 economies, 51 are corporations; the rest are states (Gershman and Irwin 2000: 36). For many, a significant part of life is a series of interactions with impersonal hierarchies buttressed by ready-made roles and norms. For the large firms and public corporations that comprise the private sector, profit is the watchword. For states and the so-called 'third sector' (including foundations, charities and non-profit businesses that distribute monies and services) solvency, not profit, is the key constraint.

The mix of these sectors – private for-profit, private non-profit, state – and the degree of their bureaucratic organisation and the portion of a given economy they superintend provide the context for economic action and contribute to people's values. What this rich set of factors does is upset the received notions of economic textbooks and orthodox economists that economies, and here we focus on capitalist varieties, must apply a rather fixed set of values if they are to succeed. The implication is that if societies do not have a particular set of values, their economies are destined to fail. In contrast, our discussion below shows that there are already a number of different sets

of value orientations operating in contemporary capitalist economies that are reasonably successful.

There is no 'one best' value orientation

Even though a variety of values motivate and shape reasonably functioning economies in the capitalist world, arguments for the 'right values' have become popular once again. During the 1960s and 1970s, they were grouped under the general rubric of modernisation theory (see Eades chap. 2 supra). Proponents argued that there were certain cultural preconditions or sentiments that people in the newly industrialising countries needed for successful economic development. Walt Rostow, one of the theory's most important proponents, imaginatively summarises from the historical record of the West how these new ideas about life and progress enabled whole societies to economically 'take off:'

> The idea spreads not merely that economic progress is possible, but that economic progress is a necessary condition for some other purpose, judged to be good: be it national dignity, private profit, the general welfare, or a better life for the children … New types of enterprising men come forward … willing to mobilize savings and to take risks in pursuit of profit or modernization. (Rostow 1971 [1960]: 6–7)

These visions, transformed into ambitions, finally become values. The modernisation paradigm, perhaps best expressed in Talcott Parsons's 'pattern variables', was essentially a list of the values a modernising society must have in order to succeed economically. They included prizing achievement over ascription, universalism over particularism, and specificity over diffuseness. Achievement over ascription was well fixed by Rostow (1971 [1960]: 19): 'Men must come to be valued in the society not for their connection with clan or class, or even, their guild', 'but for their individual ability to perform certain specific, increasingly specialized functions'. A preference for universalism, for instance, means people appreciate things beyond their narrow personal interests, while specificity refers to the ability to separate and act on a particular problem without getting tangled up in what we might call the 'big picture' (Parsons 1951: 58–67). These new values, then, became emblems as well as measures of the social progress of post-colonial states in the 1960s and 1970s on the road to modernisation.

This 'right values' argument has never really died out. Rather, we find it re-emerging in reinvigorated form over the past decade. Once more, a particular value set is essential for long-term advantage. Leaders of Asian states, such as Singapore's former president Lee Kuan Yew, have argued that Asian values based upon the teachings of Confucius have been responsible for Asian economic ascendancy during the 1980s and 1990s. Values such as respect for authority, hierarchy and the group – not 'Western' values such as

individualism, democracy and personal freedom – have enabled Asian societies to achieve economic success (Zakaria 1994: 1–3).[1]

In contrast, Francis Fukuyama (1995) identified 'trust' as the essential ingredient in the economic success of the United States, Germany and Japan. In these countries people resisted the confinements of the kin group, and found ways to channel bonds of trust into the complex organisational achievement we know as the modern corporation, itself the master rationaliser and renewer of capitalist economies. Armed with this hypothesis, Fukuyama neatly divides Asian societies into two groups: the ultimately unsuccessful developers who cannot move beyond the kin group, which includes China and the Chinese diaspora; successful developers like the Japanese, who can expand their notion of kin to include the corporation. Given the economic news since the beginning of the 1990s, there has been a reversal of fortunes that Fukuyama among others did not expect, as China has soared ahead and Japan has stagnated.

Others have put forward more ambitious value agendas. Lawrence Harrison (2000), for instance, lists ten values that societies need in order to develop economically: (1) time orientation (to the future); (2) work (diligence and achievement for self-respect); (3) frugality; (4) education (for progress orientation); (5) merit (as basis for advancement and rewards); (6) community (trust bonds beyond family); (7) honesty (business and personal ethics); (8) justice and fair play; (9) authority (dispersed, horizontal); (10) secularism. Although Harrison notes that few countries would be top on all the factors, he asserts that 'virtually all of the advanced democracies – as well as high-achieving ethnic/religious groups like the Mormons, Jews, Basques, and East Asian immigrants in the US and elsewhere – would receive substantially higher scores than virtually all of the Third World countries' (Harrison 2000: 299–300).

Harrison's enthusiasm reveals, albeit in extreme form, the tendency to identify the moral ideals of economically-successful societies and to attribute success to the practice of these ideals, regardless of whether he can demonstrate that these ideals can be shown to be effective in practice. 'The power of culture is demonstrable', he writes, adding the activities of ethnic Chinese diaspora business people throughout Southeast Asia to his list of favourites (Harrison and Huntington 2000: 300). Although Fukuyama, as we have seen, would disagree about the ethnic Chinese, we can see in the work of both the tendency to award particular cultural values a causal role.

They are not alone. 'Max Weber was right', writes the economic historian David Landes: 'If we learn anything from the history of economic development, it is that culture makes almost all the difference' (Landes 2000: 2). With the invocation of Weber, Landes makes historical claims for the culture argument. And, in fact, our value inquiries still hearken back to the

example of Weber's classic study (1958 [1931]; see Coleman chap. 21 infra) of the role of Protestantism in generating the original motivations for the investments, efficiencies and savings of modern capitalism. His radical notion that the ascetic Protestant sects of northern Europe ignited the growth of modern capitalism because of their religious values is a fascinating study in the powers of a social personality in human conduct. It also set a standard for investigations over the course of the twentieth century.

Yet, even in Weber's lifetime, there were disagreements about the 'value causes' of capitalism, and here begins our argument against the 'one best' or 'right' values argument. Weber's colleague Werner Sombart (1967 [1913]) put the desire for riches at the centre of capitalist motivations, while in the US Thorstein Veblen (1994 [1899]) emphasised the 'pecuniary emulation' of the rich and conspicuous consumption as the keystones of modern capitalism. Faced with their mutual contradiction, sociologist Daniel Bell does the sensible thing to conserve both, he historicises them: Weber may have been right once upon a time, but Sombart's stress on 'greed and gold' best captures the spirit of today's capitalism. For Bell (1996 [1976]: 295), the value of acquisitiveness underlies capitalism's historic switch from extolling the virtues of production and savings to embracing the rewards of consumption.

Moreover, Weber himself associated different types of value orientations with a variety of forms of capitalism. While he argued that the historical origins of modern Western capitalism lay in the existential anxieties and compulsive habits of members of certain northern Protestant sects, he acknowledged that other kinds of capitalism derived from the diverse value orientations of other historical societies. Thus, for instance, he recognised that a more 'financial' capitalism, based upon speculation in currencies rather than production and trade in goods, was present in scores of societies before and after the Protestant invention of Western capitalism. He also describes what might be termed a kind of 'predatory' or politically-oriented capitalism, where people or organisations made money via their connections to a political leader, class or state, and says that this was practised in the West from the time of the Roman empire. Although Weber focused on the rational capitalism rooted in the historical development of Protestantism, he none the less took cognisance of the other modes of capitalism that appeared whenever events like financial crazes or wars were visited upon modern economies (Weber 1978: 164–6).

In this, then, Weber is something of a compromise figure. On the one hand, he finds a plurality of value systems producing a plurality of capitalisms. On the other hand, he picks his favourite, the modern Western variety, because the values he traces to the religious conflicts of certain groups of Protestants best fit his preference for a model with an instrumental rationality, in which people constantly calculate the most efficient means for accomplishing their ends.

Yet, we need not rest our argument solely on a theoretical footing. We can

support it with empirical evidence. Our most fundamental point is that contemporary capitalist economies vary greatly in their natures and in the values that motivate them. The first way in which they differ is how they are structured to make money. For instance, the economies of rich countries tend towards post-industrialism: a major part of their economies make money-producing services rather than goods. They also devote a significant portion of their money-making activities towards the financial sector, in effect making money with money (Block 1990: 1–20). A second batch of countries, ranging from those in East and Southeast Asia to Latin America and Eastern Europe, depend upon industrial production for their livelihoods. Another batch of middle-income countries base their economies on the extraction of oil, minerals and metals. The poor countries from Africa and other regions find it hard to sustain trade in other than basic commodities, and much of their economic activity revolves around subsistence, rather than profit, and is centred on households and kin groups rather than firms. Moreover, in poor countries the great majority of the population has no access to banking services and no means of saving money. This puts these countries in the hands of international lenders, such as the regional development banks and the World Bank or, when their economies are growing, the large private banks of the rich countries.

Although the differences between their plight and that of rich countries is apparent, it is also important to note how the economies of rich countries use banks very differently among themselves. Banks in East and Southeast Asia, as well as those in Western Europe, for instance, tend to have significant holdings of the stocks and shares of the companies to which they are major lenders. Thus, loans from banks are sorts of equity contributions made effectively by co-owners. In contrast, although banks are powerful and important sources of loans for companies in the US and the UK, they are not typically co-owners of firms, nor do they supply the lion's share of investment capital. For a major share of their investment capital, firms resort to stock and bond markets (Stiglitz 1994: 254).

These differences have important consequences. Banks in the UK and the US, because they are guarantors of their subscribers' money, play what amounts to a regulatory role, lending to the credit-worthy and denying loans to the unworthy (Block 1996: 150–55). In contrast, banks in Western Europe and in East and Southeast Asia, as co-owners of large corporations, play a supportive rather than a regulative role. During economic crises, such as the 1997–98 Asian slump and the decade-long Japanese slump, banks were much more exposed to direct harm from the economic difficulties of firms in which they were both heavily invested and prime lenders. For these regions, the insistence by agencies like the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the US Treasury that banks reform themselves (by

writing down bad debt and selling their depreciated stock in the companies to which they were linked) has serious implications. The portion of the nation's wealth locked up in banks, and hence also the liquidity keeping the economy going, is reduced not once, but twice: first by the writing down of bad debt, and second by the sale of the depreciated stock they hold (Wade 1998: 3–24).

Another vital relationship is that between states and businesses. Once again, there are enormous differences between poor, middle-income and rich countries, as well as among the rich, concerning how and how much states lead or direct businesses and their investments. In two decades of industrial competition and strife between the US and Japan, the differences between the two were stereotyped and exaggerated. It was said that in 'Japan, Inc.', the Japanese government fixed the trajectory of economic growth, picked industries for development, subsidised innovations and rewarded winning businesses with market share and political protection (Johnson 1982, 1987). The US, in contrast, was said to be a laissez-faire operator, leaving businesses to rise or fall without any governmental interference, save anti-trust regulation.

Although there may have been some truth to the original comparison, the differences between the two systems became much smaller than usually supposed. Reacting to 'the Japanese threat', the US government involved itself directly in promoting the development of advanced technologies such as microchip production and the internet. During the 1980s, it financed research and development in optics, lasers and industrial materials through military spending (Kuttner 1997: 221–4). Through trade sanctions and acrimonious bilateral negotiations, the US intervened directly to support its international businesses against their Japanese competitors, even seeking to interfere with Japan's regulation of its own economy. Since the beginning of Japanese economic troubles in 1990, the US has missed no opportunity to tell the Japanese precisely how they should restructure their economy in ways compatible with the direction of the international economy, as the US saw it (Thurow 1996: 194–208).

That said, the expansion of the state-directed Chinese economy has strengthened the hand of those throughout Asia who prefer national industrial policies administered by interventionist state bureaucracies. There is an expectation in countries like Malaysia and Singapore, as in South Korea and Indonesia, that the state will set the direction for the future and facilitate economic growth of the sort that the elites in both government and business prefer (see Deyo 1987). Although the economic crisis in 1997–98 shook some of the confidence in this arrangement, quick economic recovery did quiet some of the more strident demands made by the US and the IMF for greater separation between businesses and state, as well as between banks and businesses.

The Western European case, and to a lesser extent the larger Latin American economies, provide another alternative to US–UK claims to laissez-faire economic practices: corporatism. Again the state plays a starring role, except that it shares the economic planning stage with its two co-stars, business and labour. All three in concert seek to set economic policy, the conditions for production, the rate of innovation and its impact on the workforce, as well as wages and compensation. The state acts as a guarantor of good faith between the parties, the font of extra monies needed to satisfy the other two parties' demands and something of an advocate of the public interest. This last role is perhaps the most fragile, as the state elite, in the interests of its own survival, often finds common cause with the business and labour elites at the cost of its public fiduciary role (Crouch 1999).

Before pausing to consider the value implications of each of these kinds of arrangements, we need to consider the differing relations that obtain between businesses throughout the global economy. National economies differ in the way that businesses conduct their everyday transactions: the choice that every business faces is whether to perform every phase of its production itself, or whether to buy products or services from another firm (Williamson 1981, 1985). Historically, for instance, Japanese and US firms handled this problem very differently. The large US corporations generally provided for all their production and service needs through the development of specialist corporate branches and processes. Perhaps the most famous example of this tendency was the Ford manufacturing plant at River Rouge, Michigan. At one end the plant took in raw materials like coal, iron ore and coke, and at the other end finished Ford automobiles rolled out (Lacey 1986). This model of self-sufficient production lasted until the post-war Japanese industrial revival, which relied on contracting as much of the production as possible to separate, cooperating firms. The US response was a radical restructuring of all of its major manufacturing and service industries to mirror the Japanese model (Harrison 1994). This is the basis for the so-called 'flexible' mode of production.

Other societies resolve the problems of how to organise businesses differently. An example is Italy, which has handled the same organisational imperative by coordinating small firms into virtual, not actual, production lines. This 'small is beautiful' strategy has been successful over the past 25 years among industries composed of enterprises of no more than ten people that, when working in a production chain, compete successfully in international markets (Blim 1990; Piore and Sabel 1984; Whitford 2001).

What we learn from these examples is that the organisation and functioning of businesses are historically fluid. Businesses must make a profit, and international competition, especially since the world economic slowdown in the 1970s, has driven most national economies to try any number of new

means of institutional arrangements, labour policies and the like to obtain a market advantage (Arrighi 1994; Brenner 1998). This increases variety in one moment, and fosters imitation in another.

We live in a period of US dominance, in which the primary objective of US foreign policy appears to be to encourage harmonisation of economic policies worldwide around free markets and free trade. Directly or through intermediaries such as the IMF or the World Bank, the US seeks to encourage common economic practice the world over, as shown by their promulgation of the 'Washington consensus', meant as a recipe for poor country development (Stiglitz 2000). Despite these efforts, many observers believe that continued economic divergence is a more likely outcome than convergence (Kitschelt et al. 1999: 427–61; Stiglitz 1994: 254–75).

It is not just how money is made in different countries that is important. In addition, we need to examine who it is that economies serve; that is, who gets the money. Economies pay off individuals and groups directly; the state distributes the surplus it claims through taxation; both are factors affecting who benefits from a particular economic configuration.

Once again, there are differences, even among similar economies such as those in Western Europe and Japan when compared with the US and the UK. Put simply, Japan and Western Europe are 'stakeholder' economies, while the US and, to a lesser extent, the UK are 'shareholder' economies (Giddens 2000). The key is the economic surplus produced by corporations. In stakeholder economies, corporate profits go to long-serving employees; in shareholder economies, the profits go to those who own the companies' shares. This means that stakeholder economies reward the steadfast members of the corporation over the capitalist risk-taking investor, the implication being that organisational loyalty is more important to society than individual accumulation of capital.

In addition to these qualitative distinctions, the distribution of income in societies also becomes highly relevant in showing us who receives the rewards of a particular economic system. A measure like the Gini index, which indicates the degree to which incomes are equally distributed, can be very helpful. It summarises the total results of distribution, either through direct compensation to employees on the part of corporations or through the redistribution of corporate surplus through state expenditures. We can ask the question: when all is said and done, which economies produce more equal distributions of income and which do not? We find some interesting clusters of countries. First, incomes are more equal in Western Europe and Japan than they are in the US and the UK. This is consistent with the stakeholder–shareholder distinction: corporations in Western Europe and Japan would distribute more of their surplus to their employees, a larger number, than to their shareholders. In contrast, corporations in the US and the UK would pay

out larger sums to the smaller proportion of their citizens who are shareholders.

Other patterns suggest themselves. The Scandinavian countries have the most equal distributions of income, followed, with the exception of Russia, by Eastern Europe. The US finds itself in the same league as Australia and New Zealand, but most significantly, its income distribution is as unequal as the majority of poorer countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. In what must be one of the great ironies of contemporary history, the US and China find themselves tied with Ethiopia, Tunisia and the Kyrgyz Republic, among the higher inequality countries with identical Gini indexes (World Bank 2001: 282–3).

Aside from the stakeholder distinction, what accounts for these differences? The presence of an active welfare state in Scandinavia and Western Europe, and its absence in the US, could help explain why the US finds itself in such anomalous company. In the US, the overall taxation rate, the crucial component of any welfare system, is significantly lower than its rich-country counterparts. Less money, in other words, is taken by taxation from the rich and given to the poor (OECD 2003).

Poor countries find themselves in the same position as the US, and partly for the same reasons. Once again, they typically tax less than countries with more equal income distribution and thus, like the US, have less to redistribute. In addition, and also like the US, they have powerful ruling classes that use political influence to insulate themselves from higher taxes. Thus, they have little welfare and return little to their poor.

In sum, we have looked at how economies make money and to whom they spread the rewards, and noticed significant differences. They are not only evidence of continued divergence, but forces for continued divergence.

Different economies, different values

Perhaps another reason why complete convergence is unlikely concerns the relationship between economies and values: different economies generate and are generated by different values. To be sure, economies and values utterly incompatible with the world economy over the past 200 years presumably no longer exist. Capitalism and the rule of profit are powerful enough to discipline extreme outliers over the long haul. That said, economic differences breed value differences, and vice versa.

The economic differences we have discovered suggest significant differences in value orientations, which we can approach by using the stakeholder–shareholder distinction once more. First, employees' institutional loyalties among stakeholders are rewarded at the expense of individual royalties for the shareholder. The relationship between persons and institutions, consequently, is valued as a social attachment rather than merely

an economic relationship. While the job of the firm may be to make money, it is supposed to distribute the surplus in a way that takes care of the economic needs of its loyal members, not simply provide a wage at the market rate. This valuation of loyalty perhaps finds its fullest expression in the post-war Japanese corporate practice of lifetime employment, a commitment honoured in the breach over the past few years of economic crisis but fundamental to how Japanese business views its obligations to some of its members.

Second, there is an implicit valuation of group ties over individual abilities. In the same way that stakeholder economies value the individual shareholder less highly, so too they tend to reward employees for their role and tenure in the organisation rather than for their individual accomplishments. Compensations, bonuses and benefits accrue with time and responsibility within the firm; the competitive bidding process that occurs to hire or retain an individual person's services in US corporations is rare. Again, the historical example of the Japanese 'salary man', the manager brought in, paid and promoted as a member of a cohort of fellow managers over the lifetime of their career, is almost a paradigm case (Vogel 1967: 32–9). Further evidence can be found by noting the controversy over executive compensation among US corporations: Europeans find it scandalous and inappropriate, and while many Americans may agree, it is none the less the norm that US executives bargain for their salary. The proof is in the pay: the average chief executive officer in the US is paid three times as much as a comparable CEO in Britain and four times comparable CEOs in France and Germany (Krueger 2002: C2).

Next, consider again corporatism – the effort, primarily in Western Europe and some Latin American countries, to establish an ongoing negotiating process among labour, management and the state with respect to vital industrial and labour policies. If we compare this sort of regime with practices in the US, for example, value differences become plain. In corporatist societies, value is placed on cooperation among parties who are urged to see themselves as part of a common effort to keep society going and growing. There is value placed upon competition, but it is usually displaced from the realms of inter-firm and labour–management relations to external, preferably foreign actors. A German company, for instance, typically has employee union members on its board of directors, and it meets regularly with its unions to plan the operation of the firm and resolve differences between sides in an industrial work council. Even competition among industrial competitors is muted, as both employers and employees are encouraged to think of the good of the industry and for the nation. The state reinforces the value of cooperation by acting as a guarantor of benefits for both sides.

In the US, by contrast, the historic antagonisms between labour and management have seldom yielded to the corporatist persuasion of the occasional president who has sought smoother industrial relations or restraints

on prices or wages (Green 1980). Instead, the state has intervened to aid one side or the other at different points in time. The Reagan administration, it will be remembered, abandoned the state-as-mediator tack more typical of the Nixon–Ford–Carter years when it acted as management, fired the nation's air traffic controllers, and led a national effort to reduce the influence of unions in the country (Kuttner 1997: 99). The Clinton years were marked by an uneasy return to both limited union advocacy in government and pleas for labour–management cooperation in industrial councils. We have tried to show that these kinds of value orientations vary over time. It is still important to observe that, when compared with European orientations towards cooperation at home and competition abroad, the US still values competition among economic parties, including between labour and management. So too, it places a much more limited value on cooperation, which occurs typically in the limited cases where labour and management find their interests coinciding in a particular trade matter.

It thus appears that some societies value equality more than others. But this judgement needs refinement, as people's beliefs about equality are complicated. For instance, economic inequality in the US is treated as the outcome of economic competition among individuals for economic rewards. So long as people have equality of opportunity, Americans generally are satisfied, and such inequalities as exist are seen as a just result of economic competition. If the reader finds this argument familiar, it is because the country has been discussing the issue via disputes over the policy of affirmative action since the early 1970s. For all of the tugging of those favouring affirmative action, the policy has been limited to equality of opportunity instead of being extended to take into account equality of outcomes (Ezorsky 1991).

Other societies define equality differently. Some seek equality of outcome as well. For example, India has sought to reserve employment and university places for disadvantaged groups such as the outcastes and indigenous tribes. In Malaysia, the state has sought to guarantee greater ethnic Malay economic success compared to ethnic Chinese by requiring Malay economic participation in most of the country's firms. It has also buttressed Malay representation in government bureaucracies through preferential hiring. Both the Indian and Malaysian cases are relatively modest attempts to achieve equality of outcome as well as that of opportunity, but they are different from the approach to equality taken by the US. One can say that they share, therefore, different values with respect to economic equality.

Differences in the national distribution of income also suggest value differences. The combination of taxation and welfare policies in Scandinavia attempts to equalise the usual inequalities that arise in industrial societies. The Scandinavians capture the surpluses produced through taxes and redistribute it

through payments and services in order to reduce economic inequality. To a lesser extent, Western Europe and the former socialist countries of Eastern Europe attempt the same, though their redistributive reach does not equal that of the Scandinavians. One would be hard put to describe any of them as attempting to provide equality of outcomes. Their differences in value orientations at this level of generalisation might be described in terms of degree rather than of type.

Do the differences make a difference?

We have seen how economies are differently organised and how they are motivated by different values. The question that arises now has a deeper relevance: what is the relationship between prosperity and these different values and economic systems? If economies oriented differently are of comparable prosperity, there would be less reason to assume that one economic system is best, to be emulated by all.

We start with the simplest and most obvious question: what economies are most successful by the conventional criterion of wealth generated? An uncontroversial measure of wealth is gross national product (GNP) per capita. Using figures from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (UNDP 2002: 190–92), which converts different currencies to US dollars through purchasing power parity, we can generate a list of the top ten economies (see Table 19.1).

Table 19.1 Top ten economies, GNP per capita, 2000

1	Luxembourg	$50,061	6	Switzerland	$28,769
2	United States	$34,142	7	Canada	$27,840
3	Norway	$29,918	8	Denmark	$27,627
4	Ireland	$29,886	9	Belgium	$26,765
5	Iceland	$29,581	10	Austria	$26,765

It is an interesting list. With the exception of the US and Canada, it is composed of Scandinavian and Western European nations with fairly robust welfare states. Once more with the same exceptions, it features Western European and Scandinavian societies that organise the interests of labour, capital and the state along corporatist lines (Crouch 1999: 349–52). Thus it seems that a variety of economic orientations, albeit confined to the parameters we have discussed in this chapter, can produce reasonable economic outcomes.

Suppose we ask a more demanding question: can a variety of economies achieve a broader set of goals more closely related to the concept of human

well-being? We can measure well-being with the UNDP's 'human development index' (HDI), developed by Amartya Sen. The index is based on three components (Sen 1999: 23): 'indicators of longevity, education and income per head – it is not exclusively focused on economic opulence (as GNP is)'. The income component of the HDI is measured as GDP per capita, and uses World Bank data for this (see UNDP 2002: 193). For longevity, the index uses average life expectancy at birth. The education part of the index is calculated by combining the adult literacy rate with the proportion of population aged six to eight enrolled in primary school. This generates a list somewhat different from our earlier one (UNDP 2002: 190-2) (see Table 19.2).

Table 19.2 Top ten countries, UNDP human development index, 2000

1	Norway	6	United States
2	Sweden	7	Iceland
3	Canada	8	Netherlands
4	Belgium	9	Japan
5	Australia	10	Finland

What is interesting about this list is that the countries' scores are virtually identical (they are separated by 0.012 of a point), which means that they provide roughly the same quality of life, while their incomes vary widely. Among these ten, incomes range from the $34,142 per person in the US to $24,277 per person in Sweden. Put another way, Sweden produces a quality of life equivalent to that in the US, while spending only 70 per cent of what the US does. Thus some societies produce more well-being for substantially less money than others do.

What explains the ability of some societies to produce equivalent well-being for less? The answer is highly redistributive welfare states. Societies such as Austria, Belgium and Denmark collect more of the GDP in taxes and redistribute it to their citizens in the form of income and services than does, for example, the US. Called 'high-income, high-equity societies', they succeed in keeping their overall economic inequality very low – about 40 per cent lower than the US (Dollar and Collier 2002: 122).

Suppose we go one step further, and use an index that reflects the degree of relative equality between the sexes, in addition to the measures used in the HDI. The UNDP (2002: 222–3) has constructed an index that incorporates gender differences in life expectancy, literacy, school enrolment and income. The more equal the outcomes between men and women, the higher a country's ranking is. The result is shown in Table 19.3.

Table 19.3 Top ten countries, UNDP gender-related development index, 2000

1	Australia	6	United States
2	Belgium	7	Iceland
3	Norway	8	Finland
4	Sweden	9	Netherlands
5	Canada	10	United Kingdom

The two human development indexes, one accounting for gender equality and the other not, produce lists that are virtually identical. The exception is that Japan, ninth on the HDI, falls below the top ten on the 'gender-related development index', its place taken by the UK. But the overall similarity between the two indexes suggests that human development and gender equality, at least as measured by the UNDP, go hand in hand.

Thus, between the three indexes, the differences in countries at the top are slight. In all, only sixteen countries are in the lists. This is a narrow range of countries – the 'top' by measures of income, well-being and gender equality. This should caution us against making sweeping claims that wealth generation is a secondary matter or that a very wide band of values can produce successful economies. Neither is warranted. The range of variation among the 173 countries surveyed is vast, and no doubt we could learn lessons from study of them all.

Still, among the societies measured, there are important differences. We can argue two things. First, wealth can be generated by economies that differ from each other in some important respects. Second, well-being, here measured by the HDI and the gender-related development index, can be achieved in societies whose economies differ by the degrees or qualities we have described. Perhaps these points are strong enough to allow us to countenance satisfactory economies that can be based upon a variety of different cultural values.

Our inquiry, then, suggests that culture and economy are related in interesting ways, and that changes in one variable can lead to changes in the other. It is also useful to note that societies have some freedom of choice in the values they actuate and still produce workable economies.

Note

1. For an argument claiming that there is a great diversity of 'Asian values', no one set of which is responsible for economic development in the region, see Sen (1999: 231–48).

References

Arrighi, G. 1994. *The long twentieth century*. New York: Verso.

Bell, D. 1996 (1976). *The cultural contradictions of capitalism.* New York: Basic Books.

Blim, M. 1990. *Made in Italy: small-scale industrialization and its consequences*. New York: Praeger.

Block, F. 1990. *Postindustrial possibilities: a critique of economic discourse*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Block, F. 1996. *The vampire state and other myths about the US economy*. New York: New Press.

Brenner, R. 1998. Turbulence in the world economy. *New Left Review* 228: 1–273.

Crouch, C. 1999. *Social change in Western Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Deyo, F. (ed.) 1987. *The political economy of the new Asian industrialism*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Dollar, D. and P. Collier 2002. *Globalization, growth, and poverty*. Washington, DC: World Bank. www.econ.worldbank.org/prr/subpage.php?sp=2477 <June 27, 2002>.

Economist, The 2000. Editorial. *The Economist* (29 January): 21.

Ezorsky, G. 1991. *Racism and justice: the case for affirmative action*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Fukuyama, F. 1995. *Trust: the social virtues and the creation of prosperity*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Gershman, J. and A. Irwin 2000. Getting a grip on the global economy. In *Dying for growth: global inequality and the health of the poor* (eds) J.Y. Kim, J. Millen, A. Irwin and J. Gershman. New York: Common Courage Press.

Giddens, A. 2000. *The Third Way and its critics*. Cambridge: Polity.

Green, J. 1980. *The world of the worker: labor in twentieth-century America*. New York: Hill & Wang.

Harrison, B. 1994. *Lean and mean: the changing landscape of corporate power in the age of flexibility*. New York: Basic Books.

Harrison, L. 2000. Promoting progressive cultural change. In *Culture matters: how values shape human progress* (eds) L. Harrison and S. Huntington. New York: Basic Books.

Harrison, L. and S. Huntington (eds) 2000. *Culture matters: how values shape human progress*. New York: Basic Books.

Johnson, C. 1982. *MITI and the Japanese miracle*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Johnson, C. 1987. Political institutions and economic performance: the government–business relationship in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. In *The political economy of the new Asian industrialism* (ed.) F. Deyo. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Kitschelt, H., P. Lange, G. Marks and J. Stephens 1999. Convergence and divergence in advanced capitalist democracies. In *Continuity and change in contemporary capitalism* (eds) H. Kitschelt, P. Lange, G. Marks and J. Stephens. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Krueger, A. 2002. When it comes to income inequality, more than just market forces are at work. *New York Times* (4 April): C2.

Kuttner, R. 1997. *Everything for sale: the virtues and limits of markets*. New York: Alfred Knopf.

Lacey, R. 1986. *Ford: the men and the machine*. New York: Ballantine Books.

Landes, D. 2002. Culture makes almost all the difference. In *Culture matters: how values shape human progress* (eds) L. Harrison and S. Huntington. New York: Basic Books.

OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) 2003. *Revenue statistics, 1965–1996*. www.oecd.org <January 23, 2003>.

Parsons, T. 1951. *The social system*. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press.

Piore, M. and C. Sabel 1984. *The second industrial divide: prospects for prosperity*. New York: Basic Books.

Rostow, W.W. 1971 (1960). *The stages of economic growth*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sen, A. 1999. *Development as freedom*. New York: Alfred Knopf.

Sombart, W. 1967 (1913). *Luxury and capitalism*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Stiglitz, J. 1994. *Whither socialism?* Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Stiglitz, J. 2000. The insider: what I learned at the world economic crisis. *New Republic* (17 April): 56–60.
Thurow, L. 1996. *The future of capitalism: how today's economic forces shape tomorrow's world*. New York: William Morrow.
UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) 2002. *Deepening democracy in a fragmented world*. New York: Oxford University Press.
Veblen, T. 1994 (1899). *The theory of the leisure class*. New York: Viking Penguin.
Vogel, E. 1967. *Japan's new middle class*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Wade, R. 1998. The Asian crisis: the high debt model versus the Wall Street–Treasury–IMF complex. *New Left Review* 228 (March–April): 3–24.
Weber, M. 1958 (1931). *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
Weber, M. 1978. *Economy and society*. (G. Roth and C. Wittich, eds) Berkeley: University of California Press.
Whitford, J. 2001. The decline of a model? Challenge and response in the Italian industrial districts. *Economy and Society* 30: 38–65.
Williamson, O. 1981. The economics of organization: the transaction cost approach. *American Journal of Sociology* 86: 548–77.
Williamson, O. 1985. *The economic institutions of capitalism: firms, markets, and relational contracting*. New York: Free Press.
World Bank 2001. *World development report 2000/2001: attacking poverty*. New York: Oxford University Press.
Zakaria, F. 1994. Culture is destiny: a conversation with Lee Kuan Yew. *Foreign Affairs* 73 (March–April): 1–20.

20 Gender

Maila Stivens

Anthropology has much to offer the study of the economic, feminist anthropology especially so. Gender is a key social relation shaping the material flows of production, consumption and exchange, and is in turn shaped by those flows. But making economic anthropology more sensitive to gender issues has proved something of a challenge. With the growing consciousness in the 1970s of the importance of gender in understanding societies, feminist anthropologists soon realised more was required than simply 'adding women to existing paradigms and stirring'. Instead, we needed to recast the models used to think about the place of gender, not simply women, within economic anthropology.

It soon became clear, however, that anthropology as a whole had a problem with talking about 'women' and 'gender'. As Moore (1988) notes, it was not so much that women were absent from analyses: many of the classic texts of anthropology in fact provided much material about women's activities, including their activities in economic spheres. It was more the ways in which they were written about and the importance granted in analyses to gender as a social construct. The available frameworks within anthropology to think about gender in relation to economic activities have been part of the problem, especially the notions of the 'economic' and the 'domestic'. A serious rethinking from a gendered perspective of the concepts employed in talking about the range of 'economies' typically studied by anthropologists was required. This rethinking was further complicated by the unfolding crisis in anthropology in the 1970s and 1980s about its objects of study: critics of the discipline argued forcefully for understanding anthropology's habitual objects, the small-scale societies and peasants living on the periphery, as fully constituted within the modern order, not isolates set apart from the global economy and polities. In recent years these contests have multiplied with the widening anthropological engagements with the international and global processes of development, globalisation, diasporas, social movements and virtual realities.

Over the last few decades, feminist anthropologists, like other anthropologists concerned with confronting a rapidly changing world, realised that they needed to show how gender relations have been part of social transformations and to show in detail the gendered links between local-level and larger political and economic forces. Not least of the

complications facing such efforts is the rising global power of neoliberal market-based models of economy and society. Feminist anthropologists and others have been interested to explore how such models and the policies deriving from them have been deeply gendered. Most recently, there has been particular interest in rethinking economic anthropology and development studies to explore the ways in which gender-blind analyses have often ignored not only women, but men as gendered actors as well (compare Cleaver 2002).

Rethinking gender and economy in anthropology

Carrier (1997), Gudeman (1998), Narotzky (1997) and Wilk (1996) have all outlined the main debates in economic anthropology, the arguments about the supposed separation of the economy and society with economic development in its many forms, and about the importance for understanding economic behaviour of looking beyond the market-centred models that dominate economics as a discipline. Wilk points out, however, that the feminist critique of microeconomics goes well beyond the claims made by Karl Polanyi and the substantivists (see Isaac chap. 1 supra) about the embeddedness of the economy in social institutions and the inapplicability of the formalist categories of economy to societies outside the logics of the market. In particular, feminist economists (and anthropologists) have intervened forcefully to reject the division between the *domestic* and the *economic* (Ferber and Nelson 2003).

With Marxists, feminists suggest that microeconomics is not a particularly good tool even for understanding modern capitalism, because it is both a part of the very ideology of the capitalist system and much economic activity goes on outside the market even in modern societies: friendship, kinship, religion and class, all deeply gendered relations, remain of central economic importance even in market-based societies (Babb 1990; Wilk 1996: 17). When feminist anthropologists asked why women's contributions to economic activities in both non-capitalist and capitalist societies had often been rendered invisible, they soon found they needed a complex rethinking of paradigms and concepts: the core concepts used to theorise the links between gender and economy – 'public', 'private', 'household', the 'domestic' – were all deeply problematic. An especial concern was the neglect of relations of power and exploitation within households.

Feminist anthropology's main challenge to economic anthropology came from the central debates within wider feminist scholarship about 'public' and 'private' spheres (see Moore 1988; Stivens 1991, 1998a). Initial critiques of this divide in the 1970s focused on the ways in which Western political and economic thought had divided society into fixed, reified public and private domains assumed to be universal, actual social spaces (see Hart 1992, 1997;

Moore 1988). This work was important in highlighting how assumptions about biological destiny were directly translated into models of the household and the gender division of labour in a number of disciplines, including anthropology, assumptions that were often difficult to dislodge. Olivia Harris (1984), for example, pointed to the ways in which Western society has seen the household as a 'natural' unit associated with women as 'natural' beings, while men are able to transcend nature and become fully cultural. She argued for a thoroughgoing deconstruction of the idea of the household, and for attention to the many local specificities of the domestic sphere and households cross-culturally. Feminists also suggested that the model of the household as normally consisting of a male breadwinner and a stay-at-home wife was an ideological product of the European and North American historical experience, masquerading as science.[1] And while feminist anthropologists found Marxist arguments about the progressive exclusion of women from social production unfounded historically, ideas about the association of monogamy with private property and growing class differentiation were conceptually useful in exploring the bases of women's subordination (see Brodkin [Sacks] 1979; di Leonardo 1991; Moore 1988).

Some writers, drawing on neo-Marxist viewpoints, flirted with the idea that men's control over reproduction in both its biological and social meanings was the crucial factor explaining gender subordination (Benería 1982; Chodorow 1999; Meillassoux 1981). This initial enthusiasm about 'reproduction', however, soon gave way to anxieties about the overgeneralised and universalising categories of 'woman' and the 'domestic' (Rosaldo 1980; Strathern 1987): it was after all very difficult to identify such spheres unambiguously in many societies, especially those within the category of gatherer-hunters (MacCormack and Strathern 1980). Critics were unhappy with the ways in which such theorising tended to focus on the *reproduction* of society, rather than on more dynamic processes, and felt in the end that such approaches essentialised ideas of women (Edholm, Harris and Young 1977; Harris and Young 1981).

Subsequent unpacking of the ideological division of public and private in the large Euro-America literature has proposed a number of possible directions: some writers have suggested ways of restructuring the two realms politically; some have pointed to multiple links in developing and developed societies between shifting realms of the household, family and sexuality on the one hand, and the market and state on the other; others have emphasised the permeability of the public–private divide; yet others have rejected the usefulness of the division all together. Recent social theory has begun to speculate not simply on the shifting boundaries of public and private, but on their possible collapse all together with globalisation and neoliberalism (see Eisenstein 1996).

Femininities, masculinities and the sexual division of labour

As suggested, issues of public and private have been closely linked to ongoing debates about the sexual division of labour. It is often claimed that women do most of the world's work and this may be true, but there is in fact little evidence for this claim (Baden and Goetz 1998). The actual amounts of work done overall, and the proportions carried out by men and women respectively may vary enormously (see Benería 1982). But it is indisputable that the received models of thinking about work and material flows often obscured women's work and its importance.

There is a further issue here: what is named and counted as work within the society? Just as women's work inside the home was frequently not counted as real work in Western capitalist systems, so what is counted locally as work may also intersect with indigenous gender categories to exclude certain kinds of activities. In most societies, a division of labour is legitimated and reinforced by ideological and cultural constructs, and gender divisions form a significant part of such divisions: sexual divisions of labour are frequently based on naturalised ideas of such work (compare Narotzky 1997: 30). It is not surprising that unremunerated 'women's work' in many societies, such as the work of caring for children, family members and housework, is not counted in contemporary national statistics.[2]

Feminist anthropologists have argued forcefully that the sexual division of labour is not about the technical division of who does what; rather, it is about how such divisions develop and change, and about the power to control the products of labour. Particular concerns have centred on the question of the links between the sexual division of labour and gender inequalities (Harris 1984). Does a sexual division of labour in itself imply social inequality, or can there be a division of labour that is organised along gender lines but involves relationships of complementarity rather than inequality? The consensus seems to be that a complementary division of labour might have been theoretically possible in gathering and hunting societies where they existed, although few such societies are extant today and few anthropologists have made such claims about equality for specific societies. Beyond small, and dwindling, numbers of gatherers and hunters, however, a sexual division of labour can be understood to be mostly embedded in other dimensions of social inequality.

These insights have been useful to archaeologists trying to reconstruct the history of economic activities in the widest sense. While extrapolating to the past is always problematic, the documentation of contemporary gatherers' and hunters' actual food-gathering practices suggested that the image of 'man the hunter' (Lee and DeVore 1968) both past and present has been misleading: women's gathering and trapping of small game, for example, has been shown to contribute significant amounts of calories in many gathering and hunting

societies observed by anthropologists over the years (see Harris 1984; Hill and Hurtado 1996; Lee 1979; Sahlins 1972).

A number of pioneering studies of women's economic activities have been particularly influential. The economist Ester Boserup's *Woman's role in economic development* (1989) and anthropologist Jack Goody's *Production and reproduction* (1976) contrasted African and Asian systems of rural production to explore the links between the importance of women's labour for subsistence, technologies of production and property holding and types of marriage and kinship systems: both ultimately saw the motors of change in technologies of production, rather than in relations of production. (Boserup, very problematically, argued for integrating women into development, whereas her critics would respond that women were already fully integrated but overlooked.) Claude Meillassoux's *Maidens, meal and money* (1981) concentrated on the relations of reproduction within what he calls the 'domestic agricultural community'. Drawing on West African examples where residence is with the husband (patrilocal, virilocal) and young men are dependent on their fathers for access to resources, he argued that such relations of reproduction play an important part in reproducing economic systems. He saw lineage elders' control of women's (and young men's) labour as key in reproducing society. Some anthropologists were enthusiastic about this, seeing it as a way to bring gender firmly into discussions of the development and reproduction of economic systems. But critics felt that he conflated biological and social reproduction, and ignored domestic labour (Edholm, Harris and Young 1977; Harris and Young 1981; Moore 1988).

Ethnographic studies of the sexual division of labour have helped us to see the wide variations in such divisions, and the ways in which a society may have an 'official' version of its sexual division of labour, while in fact presenting very different patterns in practice. Thus in my own work in rural Malaysia, I found that actual productive practices among smallholding villagers did not follow ideologies of men's and women's work very strictly, varying with demographic, ecological and economic conditions. Villagers said, for example, that hoeing the rice fields and tapping rubber was men's work and planting was women's, yet mixed sex groups could be observed in most activities. In this case, in the 1970s and 1980s, it could be suggested that the supposedly fixed sexual division of labour was breaking down under the strains of a declining village economy heading into oblivion as industrialisation and out-migration grew apace (Stivens 1996). But it is also possible that practices were always more flexible than ideology suggested.

Gender, the gift and exchange

Ever since Marcel Mauss published his famous essay on the gift in 1925, ideas of the gift and gift exchanges have been central concerns for anthropology (see

Carrier 1994; Komter 1996; Osteen 2002; see Yan chap. 15 supra). Feminist anthropologists and economists have been interested to look at the core assumptions of these ongoing debates, most notably the idea that the reciprocity integral to the gift counters the assumption of individual self-interest at the heart of (neoclassical) economics. For feminists the debates about gift giving have centred on several issues: the neglect of the extent to which women themselves have figured as objects of exchange; women's role in gift giving and exchange; and the issue of altruism.

Anthropology has been replete with accounts of sister exchange and the social bonds it supposedly forges: indeed Claude Lévi-Strauss (1969) argued that the exchange of women by men constitutes the very origins of culture. Such schemes imply that men are the active agents and women the objects of these activities. Mark Osteen (2002: 19) suggests, on the contrary, that much of the literature on gifts in a range of societies suggests that women dominate gift rituals, and asks if this is evidence of oppression or power. Writing outside anthropology, Nancy Folbre and Heidi Hartmann (1988) have argued that neoclassical and neo-Marxist theories subsume the affective realm and acts of sharing and caring to other masculinist master codes. If it is assumed that men operate in the wider sphere of commodities, leaving the domestic sphere to women, then perhaps somewhat contradictorily, the claim that gift giving oppresses women might be sustainable: women relegated to the domestic are left the essentially trivial sphere of gift exchange, while men operate in more authentic avenues of power. It seems to me, however, that it is again problematic to assume such a dual division.

Similarly, it is argued that the emphasis on acts of giving as the glue of society, whether generous and altruistic or aggressive and competitive, focuses unduly on the acts of men as gift givers (Osteen 2002). Annette Weiner (1976), among others, was concerned to counter this, showing the intricate roles of women in Trobriand exchanges (see Josephides 1985). In an interesting discussion, Komter (1996: 124) explores in some depth how we might understand women's role in gift exchanges in a broad range of societies. She suggests that their role could be understood in relation to power in gender relationships as creating four models, in which power varies with the context of gift giving: (1) asymmetrical power in favour of men; (2) equivalent reciprocity, whereby each gender benefits equally; (3) asymmetrical reciprocity in favour of women; or (4) a condition of alternating asymmetry, in which men and women profit alternatively from the dominant and gendered patterns of gift giving. In the first case, for example, women's generosity in gift giving in some Western societies, 'altruism' may be forced upon them by dominant gender relationships. This highlights the difficulties with the concept of altruism and its embeddedness in such power relations.

A more esoteric debate in anthropology has followed the work of Marilyn

Strathern (1988) about the 'partible person' in Melanesia, the person conceived as a divisible composite of relations rather than as the unitary subject of Western discourse. As Douglas (1998) notes, Strathern's abstract differentiation along a we–they axis of (Western) unitary individual and the (Melanesian) partible person destabilises the society–individual dichotomy itself, as an ethnocentric, hierarchised Western construct inappropriate to Melanesian sociality. She points out that Strathern's distinction between relational and bounded conceptions of the person invokes a timeless categorical opposition between 'the West' and the non-modernised Oceanic rest, as if contemporary Melanesia has somehow developed outside of the modern world order and is not part of it. But the debate about partible persons is none the less interesting in the ways in which it underlines how acting ('economically') within cycles of gift exchanges, for example, is constitutive of the person and the society. This is an insight that has been developed in a sizeable body of recent interesting feminist work looking at the intersections of culture and economy in a globalising world, which is briefly examined below.

Households, production, family labour and power

Feminists have been concerned to deconstruct a number of problematic assumptions about the structure of households and the power imbalances attaching to gender relations within them. Understanding issues of the power relations within households has all kinds of implications for understanding material processes: who controls the labour of household members? Who appropriates the product of labour? Who has access to the means of production held by the household? And who has control over children, especially control over their labour? As noted, a number of disciplines, anthropology included, have tended to assume a naturalistic model of the household characterised by a 'normal' sexual division of labour, and headed by a male.

For example, the tendency to think of farmers as male heads of households who manage family labour, which is unproblematically assumed to be at their disposal, has been especially troublesome in studies of small-scale rural production. It has also often been assumed that many households in pre-capitalist societies altruistically pool their products of labour or income from household production, smallholding, wages, crafts, farming and small businesses (for example, Wilk 1996). But feminists have challenged the assumption that households are sites of equitable redistributions of resources, and have looked at the ways in which the products of labour are acquired and dispensed. Ann Whitehead (1984), for example, has written about the conjugal contract governing the unequal access to the resources available to household members in both societies characterised by direct production, like Ghana, and those characterised by the purchase of goods, like Britain. She emphasises the

changing features and terms of such contracts, which depend on the location of the household in the wider economy. Like Harris (1984), she argues that writers on household production had failed to account for the changing nature of the production, distribution and consumption relations within the household: this depends on positions within the socioeconomic structure or on changes in that structure over time, and transformations in the larger economy which have direct effects on household relations and roles, and on the work of its members.[3]

Property relations

A key dimension of household power relations is property ownership. Within anthropology's rich body of material on kinship, property and inheritance there has been an evolving understanding of the far-reaching transformations produced by colonialism and uneven development. Recent concerns have centred on gender and land reform within development. Yngstrom (2002: 21), for example, has underlined the problems in the evolutionary models of land tenure that dominate policy debates, accommodating women only in their dependent position as wives of landholders who are assumed to be heads of idealised households. But there have been comparatively few anthropological accounts specifically focusing on the gender dimensions of property: some of the more significant studies have included Goody (1976, 1990), Hirschon (1984), Maher (1974) on Morocco, Agarwal (1994) on India, Moors (1995) on Palestine, Goheen (1996) on the Cameroon, and Carmen Diana Deere and Magdalena León (2001) on Latin America (for a recent exploration of property in anthropology see Hann 1998). These accounts have explored some of the ways in which formal legal codes, local ideologies and everyday practices intersect, and the often complex outcomes of such intersections.

As Bina Agarwal (1994) argues for India and Annalise Moors (1995) argues for the West Bank, women's legal rights to property may be difficult to mobilise in practice. Moreover, the dynamics of inheritance and the relationship between male and female landholding in given systems may be complex. For example, in my own study area, matrilineal Negeri Sembilan in Malaysia (Stivens 1996), local ideology said that men held acquired, commoditised smallholding rubber land under Islamic law, whereas women held the small parcels of ancestral rice land under customary law. Land titles, however, told a different story, with women in fact holding sizeable proportions of commoditised land, and most of the larger rubber landholders being women. (I argued that there had been a series of feminisations of land ownership, first with the colonial reconstitution of land tenure, then with the decline in the rural economy with industrialisation.) But with almost all rice production ceasing in the 1980s, and rubber and other crop production being in crisis due to the absence of younger villagers, women's land rights today

have declined to the status of a fallback insurance in a modern world. It is clear that Malaysia's stunningly successful modernisation poses a real danger to Negeri Sembilan Malay women's colonially-reconstituted customary land rights, with both capitalist encroachment of the rural economy and the Islamisation of recent years.

Small-scale rural production and the household

There have been a number of attempts to create typologies of peasantries, but most characterise a peasant by rural residence, reliance on family labour on smallholdings, and a relationship of economic interdependence to varying degrees with larger economic systems and urban centres (see Harris chap. 26 infra). In addition, for many analysts, the category is often a cultural and political one, in which peasants are seen as embodying particular forms of rural social life, often within critiques of the destructive effects of capitalism and development (see Brass 2002; Djurfeldt 1999; Kahn 1993; Kearney 1996). The categories 'rural' and 'urban', however, can be highly fluid and misleading. For example, in my study in rural Malaysia (Stivens 1996), nearly three-quarters of purportedly rural households had histories of intermittent wage and salaried work, stretching back in some cases into the 1920s and 1930s. There have been extensive and ongoing ties between town and city, with many women carrying out farm work without much input from husbands away on migrant labour, and grandparents extensively involved in looking after grandchildren in the villages (compare Ferguson 1999).

Gender issues have had little place in the complex and sophisticated theoretical debates in the last decades about agrarian transformations, the definitions of peasants, the relation of peasant economic forms to wider economies, and rural class differentiation: 'the household' has often functioned as a black box whose internal, gendered power relations mostly remain unexamined. In trying to understand the everyday, contemporary economic forms associated with rural production, it is perhaps most helpful to conceive of rural producers along a continuum of their engagement with commodity production; from those who reproduce their enterprise of relatively simple non-industrial production outside the market, ('peasant', using land inherited through kinship rules) to those who reproduce their enterprise fully within the market (small capitalist farmers, with inputs fully purchased in the market; Friedmann 1980). Such a scheme can be useful in specifying the nature of the articulation of household production with the larger order and in placing the internal relations of households and their articulation with outside structures at the centre of analysis. The historian Megan Vaughan, however, cautions us about an assumed opposition between the market and kinship, which just does not hold in any straightforward way for African history (Vaughan 1996: 73, quoted in Yngstrom 2002: 24).

Yngstrom (2002: 24) suggests that to 'understand changing tenure systems, we need to look at the organization of landholding within kinship institutions and their processes of integration into wider markets. Gender', as she notes, 'is critical to understanding how these processes unfold'.

Patterns of female landholding and of women's conceptually-invisible labours add whole layers of complexity to the models of households and inheritance operating in most discussions of rural class differentiation. These have mostly failed to consider women as class agents, because their conceptual schemes ignored women's involvement in production, the relations appropriating the product within the household and the ownership and inheritance of land: dominant models of agrarian society often left little room for even conceiving of female landholding.[4] This has been part of a failure to consider women's class agency. Hart (1992), for example, analyses the ways in which the political actions of rural women have been left out of important analyses of peasant resistance, like James Scott's (1985) widely quoted discussion of class within Malay peasant society: he unvaryingly talks about the Malay peasant class agent as 'he', in spite of the fact that a group of women are described as active agents of a boycott designed to deny transplanting services to employers who hired a harvesting combine.

Gender, globalisation and development

The last several decades have produced a large literature on, first, women in development (WID) and then, gender and development (GAD) (summaries of the debates about GAD are in Benería 1982 and Jackson and Pearson 1998). This body of work has moved from arguing for integrating women into development to arguing for seeing development as a gendered process. While much development studies work has been policy-oriented, feminist theoretical work in the field has also been influential in looking at the ways in which gender has been an important component of the development of economic, political and social systems.

Recently there have been preliminary attempts to theorise the links between gender and globalisation, exploring the gendering of both production and consumption within the new world order and of modernity itself (Freeman 2000, 2001; Misra 2000; Ong 1991; Rofel 1999; Stivens 1998a). Several authors have argued for seeing globalisation itself as gendered male. Carla Freeman (2001: 1008), for example, suggests that the 'very processes defining globalization itself – the spatial reorganization of production across national borders and a vast acceleration in the global circulation of capital, goods, labour, and ideas', all deriving in their contemporary form from 'economic and political shifts in the 1970s – are implicitly ascribed a masculine gender' within theoretical discussions. The result is an implicit but powerful dichotomous model in which the gender of globalisation is mapped in such a

way that global is masculine as local is feminine. She sees globalisation working through many economic and cultural modes, and being effected both through large, powerful actors and institutions as well as by small-scale individuals engaged in a complex of activities that are both embedded within and at the same time transforming the practices of global capitalism.

A rich and growing body of work has looked at the many and diverse ways in which gender relations have been configured within, and in turn have shaped, the emerging economic, political and cultural forms of the new orders. Drawing extensively on interdisciplinary work from history, geography, economics, development studies and cultural studies, this work has explored the gender dimensions of unfree labour (for example, Robertson 1983; Robertson and Berger 1986 on Africa); emerging forms of labour in the new international division of labour (Freeman 2000 on Barbados; Kondo 1990 on Japan; Mills 1999 on Thailand; Ong 1987 on Malaysia, and 1991; Rofel 1999 on China; Wolf 1992 on Java); migration (Hew 2003 on Sarawak); the global rise of new servant classes (Adams and Dickey 2000 on South and Southeast Asia; Bujra 2000 on Tanzania; Chin 1998 on Malaysia; Constable 1997 on Hong Kong; Romero 1992 on the United States); the rise of new middle classes with developing affluence in Asia (Sen and Stivens 1998); and sex work (Bishop and Robinson 1998 on Thailand; Law 2000 on Southeast Asia).

These studies have been most interested in the relationships between gender and the global labour force, mainly the working class. Key themes have included the feminisation of post-industrial workforces and the global assembly line produced by neoliberal restructuring, flexibilisation and deskilling, especially the downsizing of male employment as the old blue-collar occupations decline. There has also been a growing interest in consumption, its links to 'lifestyle' and identity and the growing aestheticisation of post-industrial workforces. Following Friedman (1990: 313), I have suggested elsewhere that arguments linking the 'spectacular' aspects of capitalist consumption and the constant formation of the 'new' (including new identities) can be useful in thinking about gender and globalisation: in both the developed and the more rapidly developing economies, women, targeted as the 'designated consumers', occupy a pivotal role in mediating the global and the local, and production, consumption and identity. It is their task in the sexual division of labour to produce constantly renewed and often ever-more elaborate domesticities through constantly expanding consumption.

Feminist work on globalisation is also interesting for taking ideas of the mutual embeddedness of the economic and social into realms of post-modern analysis, arguing that work experiences and relations shape and are shaped by gendered subjectivities. Freeman's study of offshore data processors in Barbados exemplifies these emerging themes. Her female informants working in chilly, air-conditioned, modern open offices are subject to rigid work

disciplines; at the same time they adopt language and behaviours for describing and enacting themselves as 'professional' non-factory workers in ways that Freeman (2000: 2) considers effectively demarcate them from conventional industrial labourers. High heels and a dress, for example, are important symbolic markers in the fashioning of feminine and professional identities and class consciousness at the intersection of global labour discipline and the local Barbadian culture. She argues persuasively that local culture and workers' subjectivities must be taken into account in conceptualising labour markets, labour processes and globalisation (2000: 3). She also suggests that the transnationalisation of work closely ties production and technology to consumption and image making in the lives of Third-World women workers, challenging long-standing paradigms based on antinomies: First-World consumers versus Third-World producers; First-World white-collar or mental workers versus Third-World blue-collar or manual workers.

What of the men in these new orders? Feminists have repeatedly cautioned that gender does not equal women or femininity. Yet as noted, it is only very recently that anthropology and development studies have begun systematically to explore the ways in which gender-blind analyses have ignored men as gendered actors (Cleaver 2002; Cornwall and Lindisfarne 1994). A number of studies have looked at the interactions of gender relations and emerging labour-control regimes from the perspective of men, concentrating in particular on labour mobility (Ong and Nonini 1997 on Chinese diasporas; Osella and Osella 2000a, 2000b on Kerala). Ferguson (1999), for example, has built on the long tradition of labour studies in Africa to explore the links between masculinity and workers' life trajectories within a failed Zambian modernity. Others, like Gamburd (2000) in her study of Sri Lanka, look at how women's migrations unsettle but do not necessarily undermine hegemonic notions of masculinity at home. A few studies have also looked at the gender of global business: Charlotte Hooper (2001), for example, writing from international relations, sees the most powerful images of globalisation in the prime media outlet of neoliberalism, *The Economist*, as those depicting an entrepreneurial frontier masculinity, in which capitalism meets science fiction. In new Malaysia, too, the successful entrepreneurial 'New Malay', disowning an abject past of underdevelopment, is an avowedly male figure (see Mills 2003; Stivens 1998b; Zhang 2001).

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that gender is a key social relation shaping the material flows of production, consumption and exchange in a range of economies, and is in turn shaped by those flows. It explores a number of key themes within economic anthropology in thinking about the gendering of economy, especially the difficulties surrounding ideas of the 'household' and

'domestic' and their relationships to 'economy'. The problems with the gender-blindness of some models used in thinking about economies have been highlighted, although feminist interventions have made some progress: indeed, as I note, there has been particular interest recently in the ways in which gender-blind analyses in economic anthropology and development studies have often ignored not only women, but men as gendered actors. This chapter has been especially concerned to outline new ways of thinking about the gendered links between local-level and larger economic forces within new globalising orders.

Notes

1. Wilk (1996: 15) notes how, until the seventeenth century, the economy was not thought of as a separate entity, but part of the basic economic unit, the household, and that the word 'economy' in fact derives from the Greek *oikos*, meaning 'house' (compare Elshtain 1981).
2. See Waring (1999), who seems unaware, however, that women's unpaid labour is only one of a number of forms of unremunerated labour within a number of economic forms outside mainstream capitalism.
3. See Hart (1992, 1997) on economism in recent models of the household; Moore (1988) for an excellent discussion; and Brenner (1998).
4. It is significant that the extensive debates surrounding A.V. Chayanov's writings on the peasantry (see Harris chap. 26 infra) proceeded with little reference to the gender relations at the heart of demographic relations (for example, Goodman and Redclift 1981).

References

Adams, K.M. and S. Dickey (eds) 2000. *Home and hegemony: domestic service and identity politics in South and Southeast Asia*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Agarwal, B. 1994. *A field of one's own: gender and land rights in South Asia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Babb, F.E. 1990. Women's work: engendering economic anthropology. *Urban Anthropology* 19: 277–301.

Baden, S. and A.M. Goetz 1998. Who needs [sex] when you can have [gender]? Conflicting discourses on gender at Beijing. In *Feminist visions of development: gender analysis and policy* (eds) C. Jackson and R. Pearson. London: Routledge.

Benería, L. 1982. *Women and development: the sexual division of labor in rural societies*. New York: Praeger.

Bishop, R. and L. Robinson 1998. *Nightmarket: sexual cultures and the Thai economic miracle*. New York: Routledge.

Boserup, E. 1989 (1970). *Woman's role in economic development*. London: Earthscan.

Brass, T. 2002. Latin American peasants – new paradigms for old? *Journal of Peasant Studies* 29 (3–4): 1–40.

Brenner, S.A. 1998. *The domestication of desire: women, wealth, and modernity in Java*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Brodkin, K. (Sacks) 1979. *Sisters and wives: the past and future of sexual equality*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press.

Bujra, J. 2000. *Serving class: masculinity and feminisation of domestic service in Tanzania*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press for the International African Institute.

Carrier, J.G. 1994. *Gifts and commodities: exchange and Western capitalism since 1700*. London: Routledge.

Carrier, J.G. (ed.) 1997. *Meanings of the market: the free market in Western culture*. Oxford: Berg.

Chin, C. 1998. *In service and servitude: foreign female domestic workers and the Malaysian 'modernity' project*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Chodorow, N.J. 1999 (1978). *The reproduction of mothering: psychoanalysis and the sociology of gender*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Cleaver, F. (ed.) 2002. *Masculinities matter! Men, gender, and development*. London: Zed Books.
Constable, N. 1997. *Maid to order in Hong Kong: an ethnography of Filipina workers*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
Cornwall, A. and N. Lindisfarne 1994. *Dislocating masculinity: comparative ethnographies*. London: Routledge.
Deere, C.D. and M. León 2001. *Empowering women: land and property rights in Latin America*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
di Leonardo, M. (ed.) 1991. *Gender at the crossroads of knowledge: feminist anthropology in the postmodern era*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Djurfeldt, G. 1999. Essentially non-peasant? Some critical comments on post-modernist discourse on the peasantry. *Sociologia Ruralis* 39: 262–9.
Douglas, B. 1998. *Traditional individuals? Gendered negotiations of identity, Christianity and citizenship in Vanuatu*. (Discussion paper 98/6.) Canberra: State, society and governance in Melanesia project, Australian National University. (http://rspas.anu.edu.au/melanesia/Douglas98_6.html, accessed 8/11/2003.)
Edholm, F., O. Harris and K. Young 1977. Conceptualising women. *Critique of Anthropology* 3 (9–10): 101–30.
Eisenstein, Z. 1996. *Hatreds: racialized and sexualized conflicts in the twenty-first century*. New York: Routledge.
Elshtain, J.B. 1981. *Public man, private woman: women in social and political thought*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Ferber, M.A. and J.A. Nelson (eds) 2003. *Feminist economics today: beyond economic man*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Ferguson, J. 1999. *Expectations of modernity: myths and meanings of urban life on the Zambian Copperbelt*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Folbre, N. and H. Hartmann 1988. The rhetoric of self-interest: ideology and gender in economic theory. In *The consequences of economic rhetoric* (eds) A. Klamer, D.N. McCloskey and R.M. Solow. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Freeman, C. 2000. *High tech and high heels in the global economy*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
Freeman, C. 2001. Is local:global as feminine:masculine? Rethinking the gender of globalization. *Signs* 26: 1007–37.
Friedman, J. 1990. Being in the world: globalization and localization. In *Global culture: nationalism, globalization and modernity* (ed.) M. Featherstone. London. Sage.
Friedmann, H. 1980. Household production and the national economy: concepts for the analysis of agrarian formations. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 7: 158–84.
Gamburd, M.R. 2000. *The kitchen spoon's handle: transnationalism and Sri Lanka's migrant housemaids*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
Goheen, M. 1996. *Men own the fields, women own the crops: gender and power in the Cameroon grasslands*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
Goodman, D. and M. Redclift 1981. *From peasant to proletarian: capitalist development and agrarian transition*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
Goody, J. 1976. *Production and reproduction: a comparative study of the domestic domain*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Goody, J. 1990. *The oriental, the ancient and the primitive*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Gudeman, S. (ed.) 1998. *Economic anthropology*. Cheltenham, UK and Lyme, USA: Edward Elgar.
Hann, C.M. (ed.) 1998. *Property relations: renewing the anthropological tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Harris, O. 1984. Households as natural units. In *Of marriage and the market* (eds) K. Young, C. Wolkowitz and R. McCullagh. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
Harris, O. and K. Young 1981. Engendered structures: some problems in the analysis of reproduction. In *The anthropology of pre-capitalist societies*. London: Macmillan.

Hart, G. 1992. Imagined unities: constructions of 'the household' in economic theory. In *Understanding economic process* (eds) S. Ortiz and S. Lees. Lanham, Md.: University Press of America.
Hart, G. 1997. From 'rotten wives' to 'good mothers': Household models and the limits of economism. *Bulletin of the Institute of Development Studies* 28 (3): 14–25.
Hew, C.S. 2003. *Women workers, migration and family in Sarawak*. London: Routledge Curzon.
Hill, K. and A.M. Hurtado 1996. The evolution of premature reproductive senescence and menopause in human females: an evaluation of the grandmother hypothesis. In *Human nature: a critical reader* (ed.) L. Betzig. New York: Oxford University Press.
Hirschon, R. (ed.) 1984. *Women and property – women as property*. London: Croom Helm.
Hooper, C. 2001. *Manly states: masculinities, international relations, and gender politics*. New York: Columbia University Press.
Jackson, C. and R. Pearson (eds) 1998. *Feminist visions of development: gender analysis and policy*. London: Routledge.
Josephides, L. 1985. *The production of inequality: gender and exchange among the Kewa*. London: Tavistock.
Kahn, J.S. 1993. *Constituting the Minangkabau: peasants, culture, and modernity in colonial Indonesia*. Oxford: Berg.
Kearney, M. 1996. *Reconceptualizing the peasantry: anthropology in global perspective*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview.
Komter, A.E. 1996. Women, gifts and power. In *The gift: an interdisciplinary perspective* (ed.) A. Komter. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
Kondo, D.K. 1990. *Crafting selves: power, gender, and discourses of identity in a Japanese workplace*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Law, L. 2000. *Sex work in Southeast Asia: the place of desire in an age of AIDS*. London: Routledge.
Lee, R.B. 1979. *The !Kung San: men and women in a foraging society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Lee, R.B. and I. DeVore (eds) 1968. *Man the hunter*. Chicago: Aldine.
Lévi-Strauss, C. 1969. *The elementary structures of kinship*. London: Eyre & Spottiswoode.
MacCormack, C.P. and M. Strathern (eds) 1980. *Nature, culture and gender*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Maher, V. 1974. *Women and property in Morocco: their changing relation to the process of social stratification in the Middle Atlas*. London: Cambridge University Press.
Meillassoux, C. 1981. *Maidens, meal and money: capitalism and the domestic community*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Mills, M.B. 1999. *Thai women in the global labor force: consuming desires, contested selves*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
Mills, M.B. 2003. Gender and inequality in the global labor force. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 32: 41–62.
Misra, J. 2000. Gender and the world-system: engaging the feminist literature on development. In *A world systems reader: new perspectives on gender, urbanism, cultures, indigenous peoples, and ecology* (ed.) T. Hall. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield.
Moore, H. 1988. *Feminism and anthropology*. Cambridge: Polity.
Moors, A. 1995. *Women, property, and Islam: Palestinian experiences, 1920–1990*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
Narotzky, S. 1997. *New directions in economic anthropology*. London: Pluto.
Ong, A. 1987. *Spirits of resistance and capitalist discipline: factory women in Malaysia*. New York: State University of New York Press.
Ong, A. 1991. The gender and labor politics of postmodernity. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 20: 279–309.
Ong, A. and D.M. Nonini (eds) 1997. *Ungrounded empires: the cultural politics of modern Chinese transnationalism*. London: Routledge.
Osella, F. and C. Osella 2000a. Migration, money and masculinity in Kerala (South India). *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* (n.s.) 6: 115–31.

Osella, F. and C. Osella 2000b. *Social mobility in Kerala: modernity and identity in conflict*. London: Pluto.
Osteen, M. (ed.) 2002. *The question of the gift: essays across disciplines*. New York: Routledge.
Robertson, C. (ed.) 1983. *Women and slavery in Africa*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
Robertson, C. and I. Berger (eds) 1986. *Women and class in Africa*. New York: Africana Publishing.
Rofel, L. 1999. *Other modernities: gender yearnings in China after socialism*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Romero, M. 1992. *M.A.I.D. in the USA*. New York: Routledge.
Rosaldo, M.Z. 1980. The use and abuse of anthropology: reflections on feminism and cross-cultural understanding. *Signs* 6: 389–417.
Sahlins, M. 1972. *Stone age economics*. Chicago: Aldine.
Scott, J. 1985. *Weapons of the weak*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.
Sen, K. and M. Stivens (eds) 1998. *Gender and power in affluent Asia*. London: Routledge.
Stivens, M. (ed.) 1991. *Why gender matters in Southeast Asian politics*. Clayton, Vic.: Centre for Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University.
Stivens, M. 1996. *Matriliny and modernity*: s*exual politics and social change in rural Malaysia*. St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin.
Stivens, M. 1998a. Theorising gender, power and modernity in affluent Asia. In *Gender and power in affluent Asia* (eds) K. Sen and M. Stivens. London: Routledge.
Stivens, M. 1998b. Sex, gender and the making of the Malay middle class. In *Gender and power in affluent Asia* (eds) K. Sen and M. Stivens. London: Routledge.
Strathern, M. 1987. An awkward relationship: the case of feminism and anthropology. *Signs* 12 (2): 276–93.
Strathern, M. 1988. *The gender of the gift: problems with women and problems with society in Melanesia*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Vaughan, M. 1996. The character of the market: social identities in colonial economies. *Oxford Development Studies* 24: 61–77.
Waring, M.J. 1999. *Counting for nothing: what men value and what women are worth*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
Weiner, A. 1976. *Women of value, men of renown: new perspectives in Trobriand exchange*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
Whitehead, A. 1984. 'I'm hungry, mum': the politics of domestic budgeting. In *Of marriage and the market* (eds) K. Young, C. Wolkowitz and R. McCullagh. London: Routledge.
Wilk, R. 1996. *Economies and cultures: foundations of economic anthropology*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview.
Wolf, D.L. 1992. *Factory daughters: gender, household dynamics, and rural industrialization in Java*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Yngstrom, I. 2002. Women, wives and land rights in Africa: situating gender beyond the household in the debate over land policy and changing tenure systems. *Oxford Development Studies* 30: 21–40.
Zhang, E.Y. 2001. *Goudui* and the state: constructing entrepreneurial masculinity in two cosmopolitan areas of post-socialist China. In *Gendered modernities: ethnographic perspectives* (ed.) D.L. Hodgson. New York: Palgrave.

21 Economy and religion

Simon Coleman

> Most of the time we were anxious to secure and build up wealth for exchanges. Ritual experts came and made spells for us around the centre post of our men's house. The expert took a cassowary bone dagger he had and said 'Some men have planted stakes in your ground, now I'll make a spell and dig them out for you'. He meant that rival ritual experts had secretly planted little stakes in our ground to prevent wealth from coming to us. (Strathern 1979: 64)

What are we to make of this statement? The first thing to note is the identity of the speaker: a New Guinea 'big-man' named Ongka. He is providing an account of his life in which he discusses his childhood, his wives, the wars he has fought and the various ways in which he has deployed material resources to gain prestige and the precarious authority associated with being a local leader. Ongka is clearly an intelligent and articulate person. But his description of the process of acquiring wealth might at first seem very strange to Western eyes. We are more likely to attribute relative poverty to bad luck, lack of opportunity or perhaps laziness than to the presence of concealed stakes in the ground. Our attempts to gain resources probably do not involve the use of spells uttered by ritual specialists. And, once we have achieved material success, we are unlikely to perceive our new status primarily in terms of our ability to carry out ceremonial exchanges with others.

Ongka's narrative prompts us to ask questions about the connections between economy and religion that will be at the centre of what I have to say in this chapter. Should we regard these two spheres as ideally distinct from each other in all societies, in common with the assumptions of many people in the West? Or are the connections between them inevitably much stronger than we might imagine, both in the West and elsewhere in the world? To what extent should Ongka's reasoning be seen as displaying a misguided reliance on spiritual methods to obtain material ends? And, if his assumptions about how to produce wealth seem very odd, what about his evident desire to consume such wealth in ritualised exchanges with others rather than to engage in the accumulation or investment of hard-won assets?

In addressing such questions, I shall focus on three broad and interconnected themes that have proved important points of debate within anthropology: first, the connections between economy and other aspects of culture, including religion; second, the complex question of rationality, which has been central to the anthropological study of both religion and economics;

third, the issue of modernity and religion, and the validity or otherwise of the idea that the consolidation of modern capitalist society has entailed a radically new conception of the connections between faith, production and consumption. Finally, in a summarising section, I shall briefly examine an occasion presumably familiar to all of the readers of this volume, no matter what their religious affiliation: Christmas. This festival can be seen as a global event that re-presents in microcosm many of the questions I address elsewhere.

The embeddedness of religion and economy

Economic anthropologists frequently distinguish themselves from economists by stating that their pragmatic, grassroots approach provides a much richer and more nuanced view of material processes than is evident in conventional economic theory. In a similar way, anthropologists of religion like to regard themselves as providing a more complex view of 'lived' religion than theologians, who are seen as focusing on élite texts rather than practices on the ground. Whatever the validity of these assumptions, they generally rely on the idea that participant observation, involving long-term and in-depth acquaintance with a local context, will reveal initially-hidden connections and tensions between various aspects of life and social organisation. Michael Lambek (2002: 2) notes that anthropologists' holistic approach encourages them to see 'religious' (and, one might add, 'economic') facts as parts or dimensions of larger social and cultural wholes.

In practice, much ethnographic fieldwork has been carried out in cultural contexts where people draw the overt boundaries between activities in ways rather different to those maintained by the average business executive in the West. Thus, we saw how Ongka talked of spells and wealth in the same breath. We might also mention here the work of an economic historian, Karl Polanyi, whose ideas have resonated with much ethnographic analysis (compare Gudeman 2001: 17; Hefner 1998: 9; see Isaac chap. 1 supra). For Polanyi, in so-called pre-market or pre-capitalist societies the economy can be seen as 'embedded', with activities working through tightly knit social relations such as kinship or wider political and religious institutions. In contrast, the market supposedly involves a 'disembedded' economy, which is increasingly autonomous from social relations while simultaneously coming to dominate them.

There are many reasons to criticise Polanyi's approach: for instance, it maintains an evolutionary and simplistic perspective on different types of human society. However, for the time being we need to retain the important idea of economic activities working *through* other social relations, including those articulated by religious ideologies and practices. Kottak (2002: 175) summarises this notion by stating that the economic relationship between co-

workers in at least non-industrial contexts is one aspect of a more general social relation. People are not just fellow labourers but also kin, in-laws or celebrants in the same ritual: economy is clearly embedded in society.

Let us look briefly at the work of one anthropologist to find out how embeddedness might become manifest in a real case. In her book *Power, prayer and production: the Jola of Casamance, Senegal*, Olga Linares (1992) starts by examining two important features of Jola society: the highly developed wet-rice system, and the greatly elaborated spirit-shrine system. Her point is that these two are inextricably connected. Within the local political economy, control over important resources such as raw materials and instruments of production is ultimately in the hands of spirit-shrines and their representatives, the shrine-keepers, who are also elders of the community. The spirits (acting through shrines) are not purely transcendent entities that are seen as separate from society: they are directly implicated in political and economic matters, and need to be placated with care. Not only can they help with farming and the fertility of crops, they may also bestow illness or favours on particular individuals or groups, or even compel cooperation among semi-agnates. Thus, in this society politics, economics, religion and kinship come together in ways that are perhaps most obviously crystallised in the workings of shrines, but are nevertheless evident in all activities of life. If we saw earlier how Ongka linked spells and exchange, Linares can be seen here as tracing the social and cultural links made by the Jola between prayer and production.

The Jola present attitudes to the spiritual world that indicate the apparent closeness of non-human forces to everyday, material life. We come to understand how the anthropologist must uncover the wider cosmology, the worldview, of a given people and then see how it is made up of activities that in the West might be distinguished and termed economic, political, religious and so on. However, one of the questions such an approach poses is the extent to which widely separated peoples, who none the less share certain characteristics relating to their subsistence activities, might also display parallels in cosmology. Nurit Bird-David (1992) addresses this issue in a paper that examines what she calls the 'cosmic economy' of three distinct hunter-gatherer societies. These societies are linked by 'immediate return' systems; in other words, those where people consume the results of hunting or gathering within a short space of time, without storing or preparing it in elaborate ways. Bird-David notes that the Nayaka of India, the Mbuti of Zaire and the Batek of Malaysia each maintain 'animistic' notions that attribute life and consciousness to natural phenomena such as forests or river sources. These natural agents socialise with humans: for instance, during the Mbuti *molimo* festival the forest visits the camp, plays music and sings with the people, while once a year the Nayaka hold a festival where they dance, sing, eat and even share cigarettes with natural-cum-ancestral spirits, which they invoke by

shamanistic performances. Bird-David shows that while mainstream Western cosmologies tend to construct a division between humans and natural agencies, these hunter-gatherers view their world as an integrated entity, assuming the presence of a system of sharing that embraces both human-to-human and nature-to-human sharing. Underlying such attitudes is a further key distinction from mainstream Western models of both the economy and nature: the assumption of an *abundance* of resources in the social and physical environment, rather than the inherent scarcity posited by economists.

Thus, if we are to explain these hunter-gatherers' 'peculiar' economic behaviour we must relate it to perceptions of nature, human–spirit relations and the very idea of what a resource might be. Both Bird-David's work and that of Linares also prompt further questions, with Marxian implications, that have troubled anthropologists. To what extent can we argue that a society's economic base has a determining effect on its culture, including its religious forms? After all, we have seen how three distinct groups of hunter-gatherers have displayed some remarkable similarities in cosmological assumptions. Furthermore, can religion be seen as acting to justify particular economic and political relationships, maintaining the status quo to the benefit of some but the cost of others? This latter question may seem less immediately relevant to hunter-gatherer societies but it becomes more salient in others, such as that described by Linares, where religious, political and economic authority over others are obviously linked. In this vein, Crapo (2003: 240) has recently described the function of religion in reinforcing economic differences between sub-groups of society by looking at versions of the Hindu caste system in India (see Harriss chap. 33 infra). In Crapo's view, caste can be seen as a religion-based system of social classes, each of which has its own ritual obligations and appropriate occupations. Traditionally, the system maintained four main castes (priests at the top, followed by rulers, merchants and farmers, and finally unskilled labourers) and a further category of 'outcastes' that was legally abolished in 1949. Each caste was further divided into *jatis*, occupational categories whose membership was determined by birth, and complex sets of rules governed acceptable foods, marriage and social associations with other *jatis*. Outcastes performed the most menial and symbolically polluting work, such as removing dead animals from a village, working with leather and disposing of rubbish, without being permitted to visit a village temple, use the village well or even let their shadow fall on a person of an upper caste. Given that birth into caste was understood to be the natural result of one's behaviour during past lives, religious belief could be seen as perpetuating the status quo, including the economic differences between people.

This description of caste certainly illustrates the potential power of religious attitudes to define social positions, although one of the problems with it is its

rather static and consensual character, which does not reveal the many (heated) negotiations over status that are likely to characterise relations between occupational categories. We shall return to the caste system later in this chapter, just as we shall revisit the key question of whether religion and economy can be seen as having determining influences on each other in human societies. For the time being, we have established some of the ways in which religion and economy can be mutually embedded in social and cultural contexts that comprehend, and transcend, them both.

Questions of rationality

Returning briefly to the contrast between the disciplines of economic anthropology and of economics, we can see that the distinction between the two is more than just a question of complexity or nuance in understanding what makes up 'the economy' in any given society: it can also raise issues relating to the universality or otherwise of aspects of thought. As Wilk (1996: 120) puts it, Western microeconomics defines rationality as a form of instrumental and inexorable logic based on goal-seeking and efficient allocation of resources. Humans are assumed to make 'rational choices' to maximise benefits to themselves, and material values are in effect reduced to a single dimension or measure (Gudeman 1998: xi). This kind of argument has clear links with the assumption of scarcity mentioned above: resources are said to be inherently in demand, and humans described as inevitably competitive and self-interested in the pursuit of such resources.

Such an approach, which I have somewhat caricatured here for the sake of brevity, poses some immediate questions for anthropologists. Can we, should we even try to, identity 'rational actors' in non-Western societies? Should we assume that Western economic behaviour is always itself rational? And how do we measure the presence or absence of the maximisation of resources? More importantly, for the purposes of this chapter, where does rational choice theory leave the study of religion: should it merely be seen as an arcane examination of the irrational?

These questions are of particular importance to anthropology not only because they prompt comparative questions about humanity, but because they evoke old evolutionary spectres of whether we are to define other peoples as more 'primitive' than ourselves (according to criteria chosen by scholars in the West). Again, anthropologists of religion and of economics display a parallel interest here in understanding the modes of thought and action of all human cultures (Tambiah 1990: 3).

Central to such debates in economic anthropology has been the analysis of ceremonial exchange. When New Guinea big-men such as Ongka deploy and 'use up' huge resources in raising the pigs necessary to engage in ritual exchanges with competitors, or when the Trobrianders described by Bronislaw

Malinowski (1922) risk life and limb to sail between islands exchanging apparently 'useless' armshells and necklaces in a system called the *kula* (see Strathern and Stewart chap. 14 supra), can these actions be seen as lacking in 'common sense'? Can they be shown to indicate the pernicious effects of religion and ritual on non-Western societies? At one level, they can be reinterpreted as means of maximising prestige, articulated through the idiom of material exchanges. However, according to some writers it may also be possible to discern another kind of 'rationality' to them, associated with deeper societal logics. One interpretation of the *kula*, for instance, is that it can act as a kind of regional peace-pact under the auspices of which otherwise hostile peoples carry out the trade essential to their ecological setting (Keesing 1981: 202). A similar argument can be made for the famous potlatch ceremonies carried out as part of regional exchange systems among tribes of the North Pacific Coast of North America (Kottak 2002: 180–82). At such events, potlatch sponsors gave away food, blankets, pieces of copper and so on. Again, prestige was an obvious product of such exchanges, but rather than being seen as an economically irrational drive for such an intangible resource the potlatch might also be interpreted as setting up links between villages and groups that could be drawn upon in times of scarcity that affected some areas and not others. This kind of reasoning has reached its apogee in the work of Marvin Harris (1974, 1978; Kottak 2002: 311), and most famously in his explanation for the treatment of cattle in India. Harris notes that the taboo against eating cows in India – indeed, the treatment of this animal as sacred – might seem to constitute an example of how nonsensical religious beliefs stand in the way of rational decision making. After all, beef could be used as a valuable food resource in a country where nutritional scarcity has been common. Furthermore, Indian cows are decidedly scrawny creatures in comparison with the massive beasts in the West, which are prized for their high yields of beef and milk. Yet, argues Harris, there is a perfectly good, rational and economic logic to religious attitudes in the Indian context: thin cattle are well able to pull ploughs, but do not demand expensive food from their owners. In addition, they produce valuable manure and dung that can be used as cooking fuel.

We need to examine such reasoning more closely, and here I mean the reasoning of the anthropologists rather than of the people studied. It is true that a classic ethnographic strategy is being displayed here: what seems puzzling (to the observer) is being given a deeper explanation that can be translated into Western logics, thus illustrating the fact that we should not dismiss others as merely deluded in their actions. But we might ask with Wilk (1996: 122) whether in fact we are merely discovering what people do and then inventing a (to us) plausible reason for it. How on earth can we prove whether Harris's claims are correct or not? The rather one-dimensional rationality that is being

discovered is being presented from the viewpoint of the distanced observer. In addition, there is some slippage between the idea of the rational *individual* responding to circumstances and what might be deemed rational or functional at the level of *society*.

It is perhaps more profitable to draw some slightly different conclusions from these ethnographic examples: that 'religion' cannot be seen as inherently rational or irrational in nature – indeed, it may not be easily discernible as a distinct entity in any case; that there is likely to be more than one sustainable way to produce food, worship gods and exchange goods in any given environment; and, above all, that humans everywhere can act in goal-oriented ways, yet not only the goals, but also basic understandings of causality and agency, can vary hugely across societies. These issues will be developed further in the next section, which looks at the 'cultures' of rationality and economic behaviour in Western societies.

The culture(s) of capitalism

> Remember, that *time* is money. He that can earn ten shillings a day by his labour, and goes abroad, or sits idle, one half of that day, though he spends but sixpence during his diversion or idleness, ought not to reckon *that* the only expense; he has really spent, or rather thrown away, five shillings besides. (Weber 1992 [1904–05]; original emphasis)

The speaker (or rather writer) here is clearly not Ongka: in fact, it is Benjamin Franklin, eighteenth-century American statesman, philosopher and economist. Franklin's words avoid mention of spells and link production instead to the hard work of the individual. Lack of wealth is not attributed to the evil intentions of others, but to the slothfulness of the self. Thus, Franklin is not only describing a state of affairs (and one where even time is harnessed to the forces of production and monetary quantification) but also exhorting his readers, as if in a secular sermon: remember this lesson, lest you fall into idleness.

Franklin does not mention God or other spiritual beings in this passage. But we perhaps recognise the traits of what even today we term the 'Protestant work ethic': the sense of finding meaning in toil; the fear of idleness; the calculability of existence, and hence the creeping sense of guilt in leisure. We see depicted here almost the opposite of what the economic anthropologist Marshall Sahlins (1972) called the 'Zen mode of affluence', with his spiritual metaphor describing what he felt was a characteristic lack of urgency in the subsistence strategies of hunter-gatherers. However, the location of the passage is also significant because, in the form reproduced here, it is being quoted (Weber 1992 [1904–05]: 48) from a work that has had a profound influence in not just anthropological, but also more generally social scientific,

understandings of the complex links between religion and the economy: Max Weber's *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*.

Weber's book first came out in 1904–05. As a sociologist he was writing in the shadow of Marx and yet still in the context of a wave of scholarship that was attempting to understand the continued emergence of rapidly industrialising, capitalist, states in Europe and North America. For our purposes, his work is important because it provides an alternative to the Marxian emphasis on the role of the economy in profoundly influencing cultural forms, including those of religion. Taken as a whole, Weber's work also attempts a sweeping comparative analysis of all of the world faiths in explaining the emergence of modern capitalism in a particular part of the world at a particular time. And, finally, his conclusions suggest some of the reasons why mainstream Western thought remains so keen to separate out the religious from the economic sphere, in rhetoric if not necessarily in practice.

Let us start with the historical comparisons Weber draws up. His term 'economic ethic' points to the practical impulses for action (embedded in the worldviews of past and present civilisations) that are obviously influenced by, among other things, particular religious ideologies. He argues that while the economic preconditions for modern capitalism may indeed have existed in such contexts as China, India, Babylon, the classical world and the European Middle Ages, these places and eras lacked positive ideological sanctions to abandon the restraining forces of tradition. Furthermore, in certain key respects, such religions as Buddhism and Hinduism actually encouraged an orientation towards other-worldly, non-material values.

What, then, was different about the economic and religious forms that appeared in northern Europe in the wake of the Reformation? It was more than a matter of the growth of cities or the presence of certain favourable characteristics of the environment; it was a matter of a new spirit, or ethos. For Weber, the Protestant Reformation changed people's ideas about God, fate, work and the individual (Wilk 1996: 111). Early Calvinists taught that, faced with the omnipotence of God, each person's fate, including the chance of salvation, had been preordained or 'predestined' before birth. However, success in this world could be taken by the believer as a sign of God's saving grace; productive work could gain meaning in itself as a sign of piety; and the wealth resulting from labour could be reinvested in further success. In these terms, indulging the pleasures of the flesh could be condemned as involving an irrational use of wealth as opposed to the divinely sanctioned and utilitarian deployment of resources for the benefit of the individual and the community (Campbell 1987: 101). The twin rhetoric of the Catholic Church in condemning pursuit of money (despite the Church's evident riches) and advocating acceptance of one's social station in life was subjected to a form of iconoclasm that built dynamism into the new economic and religious

practices. If Catholics were more concerned with immediate happiness, Protestants were more ascetic and future-oriented, just as the focus on the striving individual encouraged a relative lack of embeddedness in kinship ties or specific communities (Kottak 2002: 318).

Weber is not arguing here that Calvinists consciously created the rational calculation, cognitive abstraction, work ethic and materialist orientation inherent in modern forms of capitalism. However, he is suggesting that a worldview was emerging whose chief characteristics were those necessary for the new economic system to take off. Thus, he notes (1992 [1904–05]: 180):

> One of the fundamental elements of the spirit of modern capitalism, and not only of that but of all modern culture: rational conduct on the basis of the idea of the calling, was born … from the spirit of Christian asceticism. One has only to re-read the passage from Franklin, quoted at the beginning of this essay, in order to see that the essential elements of the attitude which was there called the spirit of capitalism are the same as what we have just shown to be the content of the Puritan worldly asceticism, only without the religious basis, which by Franklin's time had died away.

Note how Weber moves here from Christianity to capitalism to culture, since it is important to him to define the spirit of what we now call modernity. The latter comprises a package of ideas and practices that comprehend not just modern markets but also the growth of secular science and the all-pervasive spread of supposedly impersonal bureaucracies that underpin the modern state. Whatever their differences, Karl Marx, Weber and the great social theorist Émile Durkheim each posited links between modern market culture and secular individualism (Weller 1998: 78). For Weber, the central process was that of 'rationalisation', not exactly the 'rationality' described above but a process whereby quantification and calculation began to pervade all of existence. Such rationalisation could lead to a 'disenchanted' world, retaining the general principles of modern capitalism rather than the specific ones of Protestant Christianity, and Weber's (1992 [1904–05]: 181) characterisation of the era in which he himself lived is both magnificent and apocalyptic in its bleakness of vision:

> The Puritan wanted to work in a calling; we are forced to do so. For when asceticism was carried out of monastic cells into everyday life, and began to dominate worldly morality, it did its part in building the tremendous cosmos of the modern economic order. This order is now bound to the technical and economic conditions of machine production which to-day determine the lives of all the individuals who are born into this mechanism, not only those directly concerned with economic acquisition, with irresistible force. Perhaps it will so determine them until the last ton of fossilized fuel is burnt. In Baxter's view the care for external goods should only lie on the shoulders of the 'saint like a light cloak, which can be thrown aside at any moment.' But fate decreed that the cloak should become an iron cage.[1]

It can be argued that Weber's depiction of modernity is far too grey, even black, in its outlook, that his assumptions concerning the inexorable triumph of secular, rational bureaucracy involve a rather one-dimensional view of modern life, as well as a simplistic understanding of the supposed conservatism of previous eras. The details of the evidence he draws on have also been disputed. However, there is much of value in his presentation of the contingencies of history. While he is too complex a thinker to be understood as simply reversing Marx's embedding of culture in the economic base, he is attempting to show how ideas can become effective forces in society and social change, and therefore how economic activity itself needs to be understood in the context of religious and other beliefs. In this regard, his work resonates with anthropological attempts to understand experientially what it is like to live, and think, in other cultures.

One well-known work that has clear Weberian overtones (though it does not examine Christianity) is Clifford Geertz's *Peddlers and princes* (1963; compare Wilk 1996: 124), where the author contrasts the entrepreneurialism of a Muslim commercial market town in Java with the traditionalism of a Hindu town of nobles and peasants in Bali. A more complex deployment of Weber is evident in Jean and John Comaroff's work on the impact of colonial, Christian culture on a southern African context (1989). They show how, in the early part of the last century, British nonconformist missionaries attempted both to convert and to civilise the 'lazy' Tswana. In this process, changing local attitudes to labour, time, space and even the self were as important as prompting discussions of the Christian God. Conversion was therefore as much about mastery of the apparently mundane world of work as it was about theology: the well, the irrigation ditch and the plough were all critical to the construction and dissemination of the Protestant worldview.

The Comaroffs share something of Weber's emphasis on the relative unpredictability of history, as the missionary encounters with African models are shown by them to be far from straightforward in their effects. In fact, a key aspect of another of Jean Comaroff's works (1985) on southern Africa is precisely the observation that, in encounters between local people and the modern world system, religious practices (for instance in the form of black-run Churches of Zion) can contest the assumptions of colonialism even as they are created out of missionised contexts. This sense of the ambiguity of religion, as potentially a force for revolution or resistance as much as a justification for repression, is present in much ethnographic work, and it often entails a further ambiguity as to the extent to which such ideas are consciously articulated by those who hold them. Michael Taussig, in his well-known work (1980, 1998 [1977]) on the encounter between 'proletarianised' Colombian peasants and the wage-working economy of sugarcane plantations in the Cauca Valley, notes the belief among peasants that some among their number

enter into secret contracts with the devil in order to increase their production and their wage. In Taussig's view (expressed largely in the language of Marxism), such belief contains, within a religious idiom, an inherent yet largely implicit critique of the alienation created by the newly impersonal economic conditions that surround peasants. Thus (1998 [1977]: 476): 'While the imagery of God and good, or the spirits of Nature and of ancestors, dominate the ethos of labour in the peasant mode of production, the devil and evil permeate the local metaphysics associated with the capitalist mode of production'.

If Weber's work clearly raises questions concerning the interactions between economic and religious orders, it has also prompted contemporary scholars to ask whether modern capitalism need necessarily be yoked exclusively to Western (post-Protestant) cultural forms, as well as to investigate the extent to which disenchantment and secularisation really seem to be inexorable aspects of modernity. These issues are addressed in a recent edited volume by Robert Hefner (1998) called *Market cultures: society and morality in the new Asian capitalisms*. The title is significant not only because it refers to Asia and not the West, but also because it talks about 'capitalisms' in the plural. Hefner's basic point (1998: 1) is that the economic growth regarded by some theorists as only realisable within the framework of Western civilisation has clearly taken hold in numerous non-Western settings, including the industrialising countries of East and Southeast Asia. However, as these developments have occurred, it has become evident that the details of market relations as they are understood in the West cannot be regarded as universally applicable. Far from being a disembedded and neutral economic mechanism, capitalist development must be seen as being constantly re-embedded in different cultural and societal frameworks. As a consequence, Japanese capitalism may be different from its Chinese or American counterparts, and so on. For instance, Chinese capitalism (1998: 12) often builds powerfully from paternalistic relationships of trust, thus constituting something of a counterexample to Weber's claim that the diffusion of modern capitalism would bring about the general demise of personalistic ties in favour of faceless bureaucracies. (Though of course we can also question the extent to which even Western bureaucracies are always that faceless.) Similarly (1998: 25–6), secularisation seems not to have inevitably accompanied the globalisation of capitalist forms: in Taipei, Bangkok and Jakarta the spread of new jeans and American fast food proceeds alongside the channelling of wealth into heightened religiosity: market growth and religious revival are not mutually exclusive. In the same volume, Weller (1998: 78) argues that in recent decades a number of cultures in Asia, including most notably those influenced by Islam, have embraced the market while rejecting the ideology of individualistic market culture as a Western phenomenon.

Complementarities between religion and capitalism are not just to be found in Asia, of course. It is also obvious that Western society has not become entirely secular, and that indeed the wealthiest of Western nations, the United States, is also probably the most religious if measured in terms of expressed belief in God and willingness regularly to attend a place of worship. One striking development in the spiritual lives of Europeans and Americans over the last three decades has been the success of the New Age movement, an apparently non-institutionalised, eclectic mixture of personal therapies drawn from past and present cultures. Despite the environmentalist rhetoric of much of the New Age, Paul Heelas has shown that it contains a highly materialist strand. Thus he refers (1996: 58ff.) to the development of 'seminar spirituality' over the last 25 years, and to the fact that neo-pagans, magicians, healers and others interested in the occult are ostensibly focused on what lies within, but are often perfectly willing to employ 'wealth magic' to seek what lies without. One might argue that such magical thinking in our own society can be efficacious not only because it is imaginatively compelling, but because it also opens up ideal realms of possibility towards which people can strive using conventional, technical action. Indeed, since the 1960s many New Agers and related followers of new religious movements have moved away from their antagonistic attitude to the capitalistic mainstream. Sanyasins, followers of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, have even become involved in developing specialist training seminars for companies such as IBM.

The important point from an anthropological perspective is that we do not automatically condemn religious movements that combine spirituality with prosperity-seeking as by definition 'inauthentic' (compare Coleman 2000). Western culture contains within it many ideological subdivisions, some of which do not necessarily regard money as the root of all evil. The latter is an attitude that derives in part from dire New Testament warnings about the corruptions of wealth and the purity of poverty (Wilk 1996: 106); yet, we should not regard the partial and idealised admonitions of a single religious system as the norm for all forms of religion and spirituality.

Consuming Christmas?

Some years ago, I read an article about a Japanese department store. Apparently, the management had cottoned on to the potential of Christmas as an opportunity to sell more goods, and so they had decided to promote it within their store, despite its Christian associations. As a symbol of the festival, the managers pinned what they assumed would be an appropriate statue on a wall: a figure of Father Christmas, crucified on a cross.

It is easy to make fun of this example and to regard it as a silly misunderstanding of Western culture. One response to such thinking might be to point out that most people in the West would be unlikely to do much better

if required to explain the central symbols of Japanese religious festivals. More importantly, however, the example points to an interesting cultural phenomenon: the globalisation of Christmas, and its apparent removal from Christian contexts and recontextualisation in contexts of market consumerism.

I have chosen Christmas as the main theme of this short concluding section precisely because it offers this juxtaposition of religion and the market. Often people tell each other that 'It's all so commercial nowadays', or 'People don't seem to understand the true meaning of Christmas anymore'. Whatever our responses to such claims might be, we can be sure of the fact that Christmas is a hugely popular event at a time when ritual and religion, at least according to a certain Weberian perspective, should be on the wane.

Such issues are raised in a volume edited by the economic anthropologist Daniel Miller, in which contributors discuss the ways in which Christmas is celebrated in very different cultural contexts. One of the first points made by Miller (1993: 3) is a deeply intriguing one: that Christmas appears not to have been a particularly important part of national consciousness in the West until the nineteenth century: indeed, the Puritans had been opposed to its celebration. The emergence of the festival in the somewhat Dickensian form we now recognise it in English-speaking countries – incorporating a Christmas tree from the German tradition, the filling of stockings from the Dutch, Santa Claus from the US and the Christmas card from the British – coincides with a period of massive industrialisation, commercialisation and urgent discussions over the continued significance (or otherwise) of religion in society.

According to Miller and many of his contributors, modern Christmas simply could not exist without an intimate connection with materialism, but this does not mean that we have to see this mixture of ritual (and, at least implicitly, religion) with economic values as a fall from grace in relation to some putative golden age of ascetic altruism. As James Carrier points out in his contribution (1993: 55ff.) on the American Christmas, this festival can be seen as one where apparently anonymous commodities are transformed by people into socially implicated gifts. Christmas shopping is not usually a casual affair, but is an intense activity in which the effortful choices and expenditures help create a sphere of family love in the midst of the world of money (Carrier 1993: 61–3). Of course one can ask, how religious is such activity? Providing an answer might need another chapter, but we can certainly see elements of self-sacrifice in relation to higher ideals such as the family or friendship. We also see how aspects of the economy and aspects of an ostensibly religious festival are conjoined in relations of simultaneous opposition and mutual dependence. This is perhaps a good moral for our understanding of many of the relations between 'religious' and 'economic' spheres, even in cultural contexts where they are depicted as being mutually exclusive.

Note

1. The Baxter referred to here was a writer on Puritan ethics.

References

Bird-David, N. 1992. Beyond 'The original affluent society': a culturalist reformulation. *Current Anthropology* 33: 198–209.
Campbell, C. 1987. *The romantic ethic and the spirit of modern consumerism*. Oxford: Blackwell.
Carrier, J.G. 1993. The rituals of Christmas giving. In *Unwrapping Christmas* (ed.) D. Miller. Oxford: Clarendon.
Coleman, S.M. 2000. *The globalisation of charismatic Christianity: spreading the gospel of prosperity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Comaroff, J. 1985. *Body of power spirit of resistance: the culture and history of a South African people*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Comaroff, J.L. and J. Comaroff 1989. *Ethnography and the historical imagination*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview.
Crapo, R.H. 2003. *Anthropology of religion: the unity and diversity of religions*. Boston, Mass.: McGraw-Hill.
Geertz, C. 1963. *Peddlers and princes: social change and economic modernization in two Indonesian towns*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Gudeman, S. 1998. Introduction. In *Economic anthropology* (ed.) S. Gudeman. Cheltenham, UK and Lyme, USA: Edward Elgar.
Gudeman, S. 2001. *The anthropology of economy*. Oxford: Blackwell.
Harris, M. 1974. *Cows, pigs, wars, and witches: the riddles of culture*. New York: Random House.
Harris, M. 1978. *Cannibals and kings*. New York: Vintage.
Heelas, P. 1996. *The New Age movement: the celebration of the self and the sacralization of modernity*. Oxford: Blackwell.
Hefner, R.W. 1998. Introduction: society and morality in the new Asian capitalisms. In *Market cultures: society and morality in the new Asian capitalisms* (ed.) R.W. Hefner. Boulder, Colo.: Westview.
Keesing, R. 1981. *Cultural anthropology: a contemporary perspective*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
Kottak, C.P. 2002. *Cultural anthropology*. Boston, Mass.: McGraw-Hill.
Lambek, M. 2002. Introduction. In *A reader in the anthropology of religion* (ed.) M. Lambek. Oxford: Blackwell.
Linares, O.F. 1992. *Power, prayer and production: the Jola of Casamance, Senegal*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Malinowski, B. 1922. *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
Miller, D. 1993. A theory of Christmas. In *Unwrapping Christmas* (ed.) D. Miller. Oxford: Clarendon.
Sahlins, M. 1972. *Stone age economics*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
Strathern, A. 1979. *Ongka: a self-account by a New Guinea big-man*. London: Duckworth.
Tambiah, S. 1990. *Magic, science, religion, and the scope of rationality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Taussig, M.T. 1980. *The devil and commodity fetishism in South America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
Taussig, M.T. 1998 (1977). The genesis of capitalism amongst a South American peasantry: Devil's labor and the baptism of money. In *Economic anthropology* (ed.) S. Gudeman. Cheltenham, UK and Lyme, USA: Edward Elgar.
Weber, M. 1992 (1904–05). *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*. London: Routledge.
Weller, R.P. 1998. Divided market cultures in China: gender, enterprise, and religion. In *Market cultures: society and morality in the new Asian capitalisms* (ed.) R.W. Hefner. Boulder, Colo.: Westview.
Wilk, R.R. 1996. *Economies and cultures: foundations of economic anthropology*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview.

22 Economies of ethnicity

Thomas Hylland Eriksen

Ethnicity is often said to be an irreducibly dual phenomenon in that, by definition, it comprises aspects of both symbolic meaning and instrumental utility. Ethnic *identity* offers the individual a sense of belonging and contributes to group cohesion, while ethnic *organisation* serves the mundane interests of its members (or at least its leadership). It is therefore uncontroversial to state that ethnicity has an important economic dimension, even if the bulk of recent research in the field has been concerned with processes of identification and identity politics rather than economic processes.

The economic aspects of ethnicity are diverse, and range from occupational differentiation in poly-ethnic societies and entrepreneurship in ethnic networks to transnational economies connecting members of the same group living in different countries, indigenous forms of subsistence encapsulated by capitalist economies, and formal as well as informal forms of ethnic hierarchy.

Upon encountering economic systems where there is an observable differentiation along ethnic lines, two explanations are typically invoked. First, the ethnic differences may be seen as a result of *cultural differences*, in that each group possesses certain cultural resources making its members particularly well equipped to undertake particular forms of economic activity by choice, by tradition or both. Second, the differences may also be seen as a result of *structural factors*, such as systematic power differences, that channel the economic activities of different groups in certain ways, for example by denying members of particular groups access to the higher echelons of business or public administration. Although this distinction may sometimes have analytic value, it is often difficult to maintain a contrast between structural and cultural explanations, as they reinforce each other. As the examples below will show, the two kinds of explanation should be seen as complementary.

Moreover, it can be useful to distinguish between analytic perspectives emphasising *individual agency* and *systemic processes*, respectively. Again, though, while empirical studies tend to privilege one over the other in practice, these should be seen as complementary perspectives rather than irreconcilable opposites.

The three dualities of ethnicity that I have mentioned – meaning vs. utility, social structure vs. culture, individual agency vs. systemic processes – make

up the scaffolding of this chapter, or the conceptual space which frames the discussion that follows. First, though, some general points need to be made about ethnicity.

Some relevant elements of ethnicity

Ethnicity appears whenever there is an ongoing, conventionalised relationship between individuals who conceive of themselves as belonging to culturally distinctive groups with different origins (for a full review of the concept, see, for example, Banks 1996; Eriksen 2002). The social importance of ethnicity may vary from nearly nothing to nearly everything. In North America, for example, many citizens of European descent claim allegiance to ethnic identities – Italian, Swedish, Ukrainian and the like – that have little importance in their everyday life. Economically, they participate in the greater society on a par with everybody else.

It may be useful to distinguish between four degrees of ethnic incorporation. Following Handelman (1977), ethnic *categories* exist whenever people conventionally distinguish one another on the basis of imputed cultural or 'racial' characteristics. Ethnic *networks* exist whenever certain coveted resources flow between members of the ethnic category, but not outside its boundaries. Ethnic *associations* exist whenever the ethnic category is formally or informally organised and has a recognised leadership. Finally, ethnic *communities* are territorially based and thus offer their members a wide array of resources, ranging from jobs and housing to ontological security.

The cultural differences which form the basis of ethnic classification are not necessarily objective, but they are intersubjectively recognised; that is to say, people generally believe in them. These notions need not be shared both by insiders and outsiders; indeed, members of the group in question often have different ideas about their cultural specifics than outsiders. For instance, people who see themselves as true believers may well be regarded as superstitious by others. More pertinently to the issue of economics, people who see themselves as taking family responsibilities seriously may be seen as nepotists by others. Mutual *stereotypes*, simplistic and often pejorative views of others' characteristics, contribute to maintaining ethnic boundaries.

Ethnicity may be organised horizontally or vertically; the ethnic groups may be ranked or unranked. When they are relatively unranked, inter-group competition for scarce resources is likely to occur, although the degree of ethnicisation of such competition depends on the degree of ethnic incorporation. When the groups are ranked, an ethnic *stigma* is often attached to subordinate groups, typically by way of a set of stereotypes deeming their culture and practices as inferior. Ethnic stigmata can be fought (as in the Black Consciousness movement), but they can also be internalised and become part of the self-identity of the subordinate group. In the latter case, members of the

group are likely to try to escape from the stigmatisation through changing their way of life. In parts of Latin America, for example, individuals classified as *indios* (Indians) may change their language (to Spanish) and their mode of dress in order to be re-classified as *cholos* (mixed people).

Ethnic groups do not exist eternally. Whenever they continue to exist as distinguishable social groupings over a long period of time, it is either because of inescapable stigma from greater society or because they offer something deemed valuable to their members. This could be a sense of belonging and ontological security; it could be something more instrumental, such as material gain and economic opportunity.

Economic activity and ethnic identity

Long before the term 'ethnicity' became common in anthropological (and other academic) writings, anthropologists had been interested in the relationship between cultural differences and economic activities. In many of the societies that anthropologists studied, several distinct groups co-existed and forged inter-group trade relationships or structured forms of economic complementarity whereby certain groups specialised in, or monopolised, particular technologies, crops or ecological sub-systems. Thus, in the North-Western province of Pakistan (Swat valley), Frederick Barth (1956) showed how the three ethnic groups living in a particular area occupied different 'ecological niches'. The ecological perspective was commonly applied to studies of ethnic complementarity or 'symbiosis' at the time, and Barth argued that the mutual dependence could be likened to the relationship between species in an ecosystem. The dominant group, the relatively centralised Pathans, were cereal farmers whose geographical boundary coincided with the point of altitude beyond which two annual harvests became impossible. Beyond this boundary, the Kohistanis had adapted to a dual economy of less-intensive agriculture and livestock. The third group, the Gujars, were 'symbiotically' related to both Kohistanis and Pathans in their respective areas. They were livestock herders who exchanged goods and services with the dominant populations to varying degrees. A combination of ecological and political factors served to create particular configurations in different parts of the valley.

In more recent research on ethnicity, with which this chapter is mainly concerned, the ecological dimension is rarely made explicit in such a way. Instead, the main concern has consisted – following, *inter alia*, Barth's later work on ethnicity (1969a, 1969b) – in exploring the maintenance of ethnic boundaries and the flow of resources associated with them. Characteristically, in a later analysis of ethnicity in Swat, Barth (1969a) showed how ethnic boundaries could be transgressed: political competition between Baluchs and Pathans made it advantageous for Pathans to redefine themselves as Baluchs.

In other words, there was no direct link here between economic activity and ethnic membership. By way of contrast, Haaland (1969), in a contribution to the same book in which Barth's paper appeared, showed that a change in livelihood could entail a change in ethnic identity. His material from western Sudan showed that Fur people who, due to varying circumstances, switched from agriculture to livestock herding, effectively became Baggara.

The question, then, is not whether there is any relationship at all between ethnic identity and economic activity: it is quite clear that such a relationship can usually be identified. Rather, we must ask what kind of relationship can be envisaged. A few brief illustrations may indicate the range of variation in this regard.

In sub-Arctic northern Scandinavia, the relationship between Sami reindeer herders and sedentary Scandinavian farmers and fishermen has been characterised by economic complementarity and, in recent decades, competition over territorial rights (Paine 1984; Thuen 1995). At the same time, a great number of Sami are, and have been for generations, permanently settled on the coast, where their economic activities are hardly distinguishable from those of the Norwegian majority (Eidheim 1971). In spite of minimal observable cultural and economic differences, the ethnic boundary remains stable in some communities, while in others there has been a gradual shift to Norwegian ethnic identity. Recent ethnic revivalism in coastal northern Norway (Hovland 1996) takes place independently of economic processes and is largely a product of changed self-definitions and acquisition of key cultural skills such as Sami language. In other words, a change in economic activities can, but need not, be accompanied by a change in ethnic identity.

In Sierra Leone in the 1960s, as described by A. Cohen (1981), a small category of Creoles were economically and politically dominant. They distinguished themselves from the two large ethnic groups, Temne and Mende, through a distinct myth of origin (they were, or professed to be, descendants of liberated slaves), through the use of English as an everyday idiom, and in certain other ways. However, since 'Creole' was not considered a legitimate ethnic identity, they had to play down their identity in public and find informal ways of reproducing their community. Cohen argued that freemasonry was their main form of informal organisation. Through the Masonic networks, which largely coincided with the extent of Creoledom, a great deal of material and immaterial resources flowed, and this served to reproduce their elite position during a period when they did not officially exist as a group. Indeed, Cohen argues that ethnic elites *in general* mute their social identity and tend to deny that they are a bounded group, and that this is a main method for retaining privileges. Although this can hardly be stated as a general principle, it does apply to a number of cases. In Mauritius, where most of the ethnic groups are involved in highly visible identity politics (Eriksen 1998),

the Sino-Mauritians (Mauritians of Chinese descent), who are numerically weak but economically powerful, are remarkably absent from the important social and political public discourse over culture, language and pluralism. The strategy outlined by Cohen makes good sense in societies where democratic and egalitarian values are strong, but hardly elsewhere. In colonial plantation societies, where the group that was dominant politically was usually also dominant economically (but insignificant numerically), ethnic markers of that elite group would form the official norm of the entire society.

In these colonial plantation societies, moreover, there was often an almost caste-like association between ethnicity and economic activities. To take Mauritius as an example again, during colonial times the plantation workers would be of Indian origin, the workers in the sugar factory would be Creoles (of African origin), the middle managerial level would be 'coloured' (mixed African–European) or Indian (usually upper caste), and the top managerial level would be European. The association between ethnicity and livelihood remains strong even in independent Mauritius, and as late as in the 1980s, a Creole who was educated, urban and led a life locally perceived as middle class might be reclassified as a 'coloured' (light-skinned) person, almost in the same way that a Fur who went nomadic gradually became a Baggara.

Notwithstanding these variations, it is safe to say that ethnic boundaries contain flows of resources. For an individual to plead allegiance to an ethnic identification, he or she must get something in return, although it can be a matter of definition whether or not this 'something' is of an economic nature. Conversely, from a structural perspective it may be said that allocating low-prestige occupations to members of particular ethnic groups benefits the groups that are economically and politically dominant.

Cultural and occupational segregation

One kind of relationship between ethnicity and the economic life mentioned above is that of segregation. Many societies are segregated to varying degrees along ethnic lines. Among the most famous examples from classic ethnicity studies are Chicago early in the twentieth century and the Copperbelt of present-day Zambia in the middle of the twentieth century.

During the last decades of the nineteenth century, Chicago grew from nearly nothing to a major city. It was a trade hub for the immensely rich agricultural Midwest and attracted migrants from many parts of the world, including thousands of emancipated African-Americans from the southern United States, East Europeans, Italians, Irish, Scandinavians and Germans. Under the leadership of Robert Park, a group of sociologists and anthropologists studied 'the urban ecology' of the emergent cosmopolitan city, observing the dynamics between the different immigrant groups almost as they arrived in successive waves. In Park's view, residential and occupational differentiation

would follow strict ethnic lines in the first stage, where individuals would be highly dependent on their ethnic network for jobs and other resources, and would live in a segregated manner. Later, following 'acculturation' (the acquisition of local cultural categories, notably good command of English), the ethnic dimension would gradually become less important economically (Park 1952). As Hannerz (1980: 44) puts it: 'The typical "race relations cycle" would lead from isolation through competition, conflict, and accommodation to assimilation'. Deeply committed to ecological metaphors, Park and his students saw both competition and symbiosis in inter-group relationships, but also mobility (or 'transmutation', to stick to the biological metaphors) and, eventually, the disappearance of ethnicity as the main organising principle for the economy.

The major exception to this image of the 'melting pot' was the African-American population. Stereotyped as lazy and unreliable, stigmatised as intellectually inferior, blacks enjoyed a much weaker mobility than any other ethnic category. In their case, the division of labour was a more stable, apartheid-like arrangement than in the case of, for example, Italians or Irish.

In the later work of a group of anthropologists based at the Rhodes–Livingstone Institute in North Rhodesia (Zambia), the thickest boundary was also that of colour. In a series of studies dealing with urbanisation in the mining towns of the Copperbelt, Epstein (1992), Mitchell (1956) and others investigated the role of ethnic identity in the modern economy. Far from making 'tribal' identities irrelevant, wage labour and integration into the mining industry led to a re-emergence of ethnicity (labelled 're-tribalisation' at the time), whereby job allocation, leisure habits and residential arrangements were regulated by ethnic identity. However, the internal hierarchy among African miners was negligible, upward mobility was difficult and the boundary with the European management was absolute. While there was hardly any 'osmosis' across the black–white divide, the experience of urbanisation did lead to a simplification of the ethnic taxonomy among Africans, in the sense that groups from the same region who spoke similar languages were increasingly lumped together as 'Northerners', 'Westerners' and so on.

In both Chicago and the Copperbelt, culture seems to have played a minimal role in creating occupational differences along ethnic lines, quite unlike the Gujar–Pathan relationships, where each group possessed particular, ethnically-specific skills. While the Copperbelt situation resembled that of the stable colonial plantation society, the ethnic division of labour in Chicago was less stable and more open to negotiation.

A question that needs to be raised here concerns who does the classifying. The above examples refer to situations where ethnic networks and cultures have varying importance for economic activities and the division of labour,

but where do the ethnic distinctions come from? As decades of research on ethnicity have shown, ethnic identities and boundaries are social constructions that change through time and have highly variable relevance (compare Eriksen 2002). Ethnic identities are created from two directions: from the inside and from the outside. They are the product of self-definitions and of definitions from the outside, and the relationship between these dimensions is dynamic and variable. Many of the ethnic identities recognised in contemporary states are to a great extent the product of population statistics and state control, but it can be equally relevant to look at the internal reproduction of networks and boundaries. The relevant aspects are: (1) census categories and state classification; (2) popular, or 'demotic' (Baumann 1996) classification; (3) self-definitions; and (4) social networks.

The fourth element, social networks, is not necessarily recognised by the state, the social environment or even the people who participate in and draw upon them: networks may be ignored by the state, unknown to outsiders and taken for granted by insiders. Yet a look at ethnic networks is indispensable in any account of ethnicity and economy.

Culture and networks in ethnic economies

Research on immigrant minorities in contemporary European societies has occasionally focused on the relationship between culture and economics. A society is culturally segregated if its constituent groups produce and maintain meaningful symbolic universes independently of one another; for example by speaking different languages, adhering to different religions, raising their children and organising their marriages in systematically different ways and so on. By contrast, it is economically segregated if, as in the aforementioned plantation societies, the division of labour follows ethnic lines. The question is whether a society can be segregated along only one of these dimensions, or if cultural segregation necessarily entails economic segregation. The predominance of immigrant labour in the lower segments of the labour market in every Western European country can be accounted for in several ways: as a result of racism among employers; as a result of active recruitment policies from the state wishing to fill certain vacant slots in the labour market; or as a result of imperfect cultural integration on the part of the minority. In most cases, all three explanations are partly correct, but the third one needs qualifying. It is by no means self-evident what is meant by 'culture', and in both popular and academic discourse about immigrant minorities it is often used to designate aspects of immigrants' life-worlds that have scarcely any bearing on their working life: religion, diet, dress and marriage practices are often mentioned in accounts of immigrants' culture. So far, then, culture seems to be irrelevant.

If language skills are considered, however, culture clearly does play a part

in the economy seen from the actor's point of view. If, moreover, culture is taken to mean the wider universe of meaning within which people live, their *Lebenswelt* or life-world, then it can easily be shown to be highly relevant for economic careers. Economically disadvantaged Creoles in Mauritius are likely to propose two explanations for their lack of social mobility; one structural, one interpersonal. First, they might say, the system works in favour of others: being a Creole implies a society-wide stigma. Second, they might add, they have no relevant network: no managing director, government minister or business executive to call upon for reciprocity. If personal networks are included in the concept of culture, then there is a clear link between culture and the economy. In the 1970s, many Pakistani immigrants to Norway were employed by the Oslo Public Transport Council (*Oslo Sporveier*), many of them through personal networks and recommendations. Networks based on kinship or local origin can be enormously important in job allocation anywhere, and wherever there is ethnic complexity, this will be evident in the ethnic makeup of the labour market. This factor has probably been underestimated by many researchers with training in disciplines other than anthropology, for they generally have not been equipped with research methods that readily reveal informal networks.

As noted above, culture associated with ethnic groups can also be important when specialised professional skills are among the resources that flow within ethnic boundaries. Cultural values may also direct economic activities and preferences in other ways. In a study of Pakistani immigrants in the English Midlands, Dahya (1974: 113) found that 'the immigrants' scale of preferences … differ in a significant manner from that of the native proletariat with regard to consumption patterns, aspirations, prestige symbols etc.'. He saw their poor housing standards partly as the result of an economic preference for saving and sending remittances to Pakistan, and partly as an expression of cultural values which did not accord prestige to housing of the sort that is standard in England. Seeing the difference in housing between British and Pakistani workers as a sole result of ethnic discrimination was therefore misleading.

Ethnicity and class

Although class and ethnicity are clearly two distinct forms of social differentiation, they are rarely independent of each other. In most contemporary societies with more than one ethnic group, class and ethnicity overlap in the sense that the division of labour to a greater or lesser extent follows ethnic lines. In some societies, such as the United States and South Africa (at least under apartheid), ethnicity is highly racialised, meaning that visible differences play a central part in the structuring of class. Even in Britain, Hall has argued that 'race is the modality in which class is "lived"' (1980: 340), thus claiming that class differences are largely understood as race

differences. At the level of popular representations, this is often the case. In an ethnically-ranked society, it will be difficult to form alliances between black and white underprivileged workers, for instance, given the fact that everybody knows that whites are ranked above blacks.

However, in reality the relationship is rarely one-to-one, and race-ethnicity tends to cut across class; there is, for example, a considerable black middle class and a white lumpen proletariat in the United States. As Fenton (1999) observes, there is a strong correlation between class and ethnicity in Malaysia, where Chinese are associated with business and trade, and *bumiputeras* (Malays and smaller indigenous groups) are associated with agricultural and other manual work. However, 'almost half of all Chinese in Malaysia are production workers and agricultural workers' (Fenton 1999: 115).

Ethnic segregation none the less inhibits social mobility among less-advantaged groups. The often mono-ethnic interpersonal networks used in economic careers, the varying importance placed on education within the group, the cultural policies of the state (favouring, for example, certain languages over others) and widespread stigma may all contribute to the creation of relatively fixed 'ethnoclasses' in highly differentiated class societies. Institutionalised racism in the past may also play an important part, as in the United States.

It was noted above that social mobility can, in certain contexts, lead to ethnic reclassification: a successful Creole could become a Coloured. It is also worth noting that several immigrant groups to parts of the New World, such as Portuguese in Trinidad and Irish in the United States, were recognised as 'proper whites' only after a process of upward mobility. In general, ethnic markers such as skin colour, religion and language tend to lose much of their relevance in situations of social mobility. Put differently, as the German writer Hans Magnus Enzensberger (1993) observed, nobody ever complained about the skin colour of the Sultan of Brunei.

Typically, cultural differences are invoked (often resulting in stigmatisation) in justifications of class segregation. In the United States, Lewis's (1966) phrase 'the culture of poverty' has certainly been used to this effect, though clearly not with the consent of its originator. The 'culture of poverty' thesis held that people in modern, urban settings with no or unstable employment reproduced a particular set of cultural values and a form of social organisation that militated against their upward mobility: lack of long-term strategies, a weak (matrifocal) family structure, an ethos of consumption rather than one of production and so on. Although careful studies of economic strategies among African-Americans have proven this assumption to be wrong (see, for example, Liebow 1967), such ideas are often exceptionally fertile in the popular imagination. In the more recent context of Third-World immigration to Europe, Wikan (2002) among others has suggested that aspects of

immigrant culture, such as patriarchal values and collectivist ideologies, prevent successful 'integration' and social mobility in the host society.

So far in this chapter, we have considered some of the basics of ethnicity and economy: stigma and stereotyping, group competition, structural and interpersonal factors in establishing an ethnic division of labour, ethnicity and class, the boundedness of networks and the variable importance of the cultural resources embedded in the ethnic group. We now turn to a couple of more detailed empirical examples in order to shed light on the insights developed above.

The post-plural society

Originally a concept proposed by Furnivall (1948), 'plural society' was refined and developed further by Smith (1965) in a series of studies largely dealing with the English-speaking Caribbean. The plural society was conceived of as one composed of two or more groups with distinctive cultures, usually speaking different languages and practising different religions. Intermarriage and informal interaction between groups were assumed to be of negligible importance. These diverse groups were held together politically by the coercive force of a (usually colonial) state, and would meet in the marketplace but remain apart and segregated in most other social fields. The concept of pluralism has been much criticised (Eriksen 1992; Young 1976), largely on empirical grounds: it exaggerated the fixity of boundaries between groups, often giving undue emphasis to differences and ignoring processes of inter-group communication and the gradual disappearance of boundaries in many cases.

The concept of pluralism can nevertheless be defended (for example, Grillo 1998) as a means of classifying certain societies, the Ottoman empire and the South African apartheid state are obvious examples, where there is little inter-group communication and few if any shared institutions that integrate constituent groups. The Indian Ocean island-state of Mauritius has already been mentioned a few times in this chapter; from the eighteenth century to the end of the Second World War it could credibly be described as a plural society with an ethnic division of labour, few shared institutions and no democratic participation in politics. Since 1945, and particularly since the 1970s, Mauritius has undergone rapid economic and political change, and it is better described today as a post-plural society than a plural one. Here, the contemporary Mauritian economy will be considered in relation to ethnicity, first from a systemic perspective and then from the perspective of individual actors.

The colonial Mauritian plantation economy was organised strictly along ethnic lines. Although it contained its anomalies – such as a few wealthy Indo-Muslim families and urban Tamil merchants, as well as a handful of *petits-*

blancs (poor whites) – one could make a good guess about a person's rank and economic circumstances on the basis of ethnic (and sometimes caste) identity. The legacy of the ethnically-segregated plantation economy lingers in contemporary Mauritius, although it has been strongly modified. For example, the public sector of contemporary Mauritius is dominated by Hindus (the largest and politically dominant group), the Sino-Mauritian elite has moved from small trade to transnational investments and factory management, and in the growing sectors of tourism and manufacturing recruitment of workers does not exclusively follow ethnic lines. On the factory floor, Creole girls meet both Hindu and Tamil girls as colleagues. (The ethnic categories, which may seem confusing, are locally-recognised distinctions; see Eriksen 1988.)

The economic growth and diversification of Mauritian society since independence in 1968 has been remarkable, and is often commented upon as a 'miracle'. In this context, the most striking fact is perhaps the general lack of mobility among the Creoles, who make up 25–30 per cent of the population. Since the early 1990s, Mauritians have debated *le malaise créole* as a major social issue, and it is clear that Creoles are strongly under-represented in the Mauritian elite, not least in the economy.

There are several causes for the collective failure of the Creoles to benefit from Mauritius' recent economic growth: internal, external, cultural and structural. First, Creole kinship and local organisation tend to place comparatively weak moral obligations on individuals; unlike among Hindus, marriage is entirely an individual, voluntary contract, and Creoles are not expected to help relatives or other Creoles with employment or places in institutions of higher education. Their social resources are, in a word, very limited in a situation of group competition.

Second, the Creole ethos and collective stereotype of self depicts them as individualists, in contrast to the Hindus, who have a strong ethic of kin solidarity. While it is common among non-Creole Mauritians to see Creole values as African 'survivals', it is more correct to trace them and the accompanying social organisation back to the social conditions of slavery. In the context of the present argument, it is none the less sufficient to note that there are systematic differences between Creoles and Hindus regarding values and local organisation.

Third, the systematic use of kinship and ethnic networks by the other Mauritian 'communities' for economic and political ends has placed the Creoles at a relative disadvantage. The civil service and the police are, partly due to the logic of kinship obligations, dominated by Hindus, and among working-class Creoles there is a widespread feeling that their best opportunity for social mobility lies in migration. They are a minority and lack the cultural resources necessary to profit from an employment culture of kinship obligations. Furthermore, the state is not just the largest employer in

Mauritius, but it also consists of a number of institutions that Mauritians have to relate to in order to get on with their lives, such as the state bank, the national educational board, the tax office, the postal services and the police. When any of these common institutions loses its legitimacy for a certain segment of the population, a likely outcome is social unrest, which the otherwise stable Mauritian society has experienced on a few occasions.

Seen from the perspective of the individual, the place of ethnicity in a person's economic opportunity structure is variable but rarely non-existent. To begin with, many people are still part of the original plantation economy, and there has been no de-ethnification of agricultural work. Many sons simply enter their father's profession. In the newer sectors of the economy, personal connections and networks remain crucially important in obtaining work. During fieldwork I have rarely come across a Mauritian working in industry or the hotel sector who has not obtained his or her job through an acquaintance. Informal networks tend to follow ethnic lines.

So far, the description may seem to indicate that Mauritius remains a plural society with both ranked and unranked dimensions. However, there are serious cracks in this edifice. First, as noted, the emergent industrial and tourism sectors are not organised on the basis of ethnicity, even if ethnic networks at present remain important for job allocation. Second, the urban professional class has grown rapidly – this is the world of solicitors, software programmers, schoolteachers, university lecturers and accountants – and their professional world is only diffusely connected to ethnicity. In the opportunity structure envisaged by, say, a foreign-educated lawyer, ethnic boundaries seem a hindrance rather than an asset, and he or she would be likely to find employment and clients independently of ethnic networks. As emphasised above, it is only when ethnic membership has something to offer that it matters to the individual. Increasingly, important sectors of the Mauritian economy could become post-plural in the sense that ethnicity ceases to matter in economic careers, even if it may remain important in other social fields. In sum, the professional skills and networks that create the economic opportunity structure for these groups are increasingly divorced from ethnic cultures or communities.

Indigenous struggles

A different kind of economic competition can be observed in relationships between indigenous peoples and politically dominant groups. Often focused on rights to land and water, indigenous struggles have, following a global trend in politics, increasingly added cultural survival and group identity to the agenda.

There are about 70,000 Sami in Northern Scandinavia (including the Kola peninsula), and about 40,000 of them live in Norway. The traditional

Sami–Norwegian relationship of complementarity and relative economic autonomy has been greatly altered by processes of modernisation throughout the twentieth century. Traditional Sami skills such as reindeer husbandry and handicrafts have become integrated into the capitalist economy. Sami in Norway enjoy certain constitutional rights aimed at enabling them to survive as a culturally distinctive group; notably, a Sami parliament (with limited power) was inaugurated in 1989, Sami is an official language in several municipal areas in Finnmark county and, more relevant to the present context, only Sami are allowed to engage in reindeer husbandry in the Finnmark hinterland (*Finnmarksvidda*).

Only a small percentage of the Sami are actually involved in the reindeer economy. However, reindeer-based semi-nomadism is symbolically of very great importance to Sami self-identity. For example, any product made from reindeer fur is associated with the Sami. The most widely publicised political controversy involving the Sami after the Second World War was the conflict between the Norwegian state wishing to build a hydroelectric dam on the Alta river and Sami reindeer herders claiming that the dam would destroy their annual migration route to the sea. Reaching a climax with mass demonstrations and hunger strikes in front of parliament in Oslo in 1979–81, the conflict eventually ended with victory for the Norwegian state, but the long-term result was an increased sensitivity to Sami affairs and a greater attention to the peculiar predicaments facing this ethnic minority.

The current situation of the Norwegian Sami can be described like this: there are ongoing local struggles with ethnic Norwegians over land and water rights, where the latter tend to feel that they are just as ‘indigenous’ as the Sami when it comes to salmon and cloudberry rights. There are, moreover, rifts within the Sami community concerning who is a Sami and what it should entail to be a Sami. Language is a key issue in both discourses; outside the heartland of central Finnmark, relatively few Sami are fluent in their ancestral language.

Since reindeer herding is today a capitalist kind of activity with considerable local economic importance, the situation can hardly be framed as a conflict between two modes of production, unlike what might be the case with other livestock pastoralists, such as the East African Maasai. It could be said, perhaps, that an elite among the Sami has monopolised the skills needed for reindeer herding, but that is not the point here. What is important to note is that reindeer herding remains significant as a symbolic marker of Saminess, even if it has to some extent become part of the mainstream economy and hence subject to the functioning of the market and so on, and even if only a small minority of Sami actually engage in this economic activity. Most Sami have ‘ordinary jobs’ as fishermen, shopkeepers, public service employees and the like. In this, contemporary Sami reindeer herding is more important as a

marker of ethnic identity than as an ethnically-specific kind of economic activity. As Harrison (1999; see also A.P. Cohen 1985) has argued in a different context, ethnic identity as such – pride in oneself, the sense of ownership to certain traditions, crafts, skills, worldviews – can be a non-negotiable asset, an inalienable possession.

Transnational entrepreneurship

Ethnic entrepreneurship has been extensively studied in many parts of the world. Typically, attention has been focused on small, successful groups such as the Chinese in Southeast Asia, Lebanese business communities in West Africa and the Caribbean, or Indians in East Africa. A famous study from Ibadan (A. Cohen 1969) shows how Hausa from northern Nigeria effectively monopolised the trade in cattle in that Yoruba city, using kinship networks and membership in Muslim brotherhoods to keep the trade organisation efficient and closed to outsiders. Like other successful ethnic networks, they were able to use their ethnic and religious identity as social capital.

However, entrepreneurship, seen as the creation and exploitation of new economic niches, can also be studied with respect to almost any migrant group that is denied equal participation in a national economy. For example, Indians in Fiji, who arrived as indentured workers in the latter half of the nineteenth century, were denied the right to own land and were thus forced into a very different kind of economic life from their counterparts in Trinidad and Mauritius. They became urbanised, and many went into various forms of trade.

In the contemporary context, entrepreneurship among immigrants to Western Europe warrants particular attention. This is often simply a matter of using ethnic networks and, perhaps, cultural skills to make a living in an alien country. Tamils in Western Europe, for example, draw on caste and village networks to find jobs, and like many migrants they have a transnational economy where remittances to Sri Lanka are a main concern (Fuglerud 1999). This implies that even in societies where ethnicity is not a formal criterion for economic differentiation, the population may be occupationally differentiated along ethnic lines.

National immigration laws, as well as international agreements such as the Schengen treaty (facilitating the movement of people within the European Union while limiting the influx of people from outside), encourage new strategies of entrepreneurship for migrant groups. The informal economy, where illegal immigrants form the backbone of the labour force, is probably very considerable in many rich countries (see Harris 2002 for some estimates).

A study of Senegalese Wolof in Emilia Romagna (northern Italy) by Riccio (1999) demonstrates several important features of transnational entrepreneurship. Wolof are traditionally associated with trade in West Africa,

and they have successfully adapted their skills to function transnationally, spanning Senegalese and European markets in their business flows. Riccio argues that, in a manner similar to the Hausa of Ibadan, Wolof in Italy are morally and socially bound by their allegiance to Muslim brotherhoods in Senegal (the Mouride), but he also points out that without a strong organisation of Wolof wholesalers based in Italy offering not only goods but also training of itinerant salesmen, the individual Wolof peddler would likely fail.

The Wolof trade system studied by Riccio functions in both directions. Traders live in Italy part of the year and in Senegal part of the year, and the goods offered for sale in the Senegalese markets range from hi-fi equipment and other electronic goods to the trader's own second-hand clothes. Although Riccio takes pains to describe the variations in the circumstances of migration, a clear pattern emerges from his material, which shows that Wolof migrants to Italy are positioned in Italian society in a unique way, due to particular features of their culture and local organisation in Senegal. Somewhat like Gujerati traders in London (Tambs-Lyche 1980), they draw on pre-existing social and cultural resources in developing their economic niche under new circumstances.

Transnational microeconomies have become very widespread during the last decades, so common that a study of a town in the Dominican Republic is not complete until one has explored the lives of townspeople living temporarily or permanently in New York City (Christian Krohn-Hansen personal communication), and migration must increasingly be envisaged as a transnational venture rather than as a one-way process resulting in segregation, assimilation or integration in the receiving society. The economics of transnationalism can be observed in Congolese *sapeurs* (Friedman 1990) flaunting their wealth in Brazzaville following a frugal period of hard work in Paris, in the informal banking system whereby Somali refugees send remittances to relatives, in the flow of goods into and out of immigrant-owned shops in any European city, and most certainly in thousands of local communities, from Kerala to Jamaica, which benefit from the efforts of locals working overseas. Seen from a global perspective, this kind of transnational economics can easily be seen as a vertical ethnic division of labour whereby the exploitative systems of colonialism are continued. However, seen from the perspective of the local community it may equally well be seen as a much-needed source of wealth, and seen from the perspective of the individual it entails a new set of risks and opportunities.

Conclusion

Ethnic distinctions are, at the conceptual level, categorical contrasts that help people to simplify the social world by dividing its members into bounded,

mutually-exclusive groups. They thereby offer shorthand descriptions of other people's 'character' and 'cultural traits'. This very conspicuous and politicised aspect of ethnicity has been granted enormous attention by scholars and others, many motivated by social reform and a concern for human rights, and it has often been shown that the map does not fit the territory. The imputed cultural differences are at best stereotyped, at worst fictitious; the boundaries are fuzzy and the world is full of cultural hybrids and ethnic anomalies. However, this chapter has shown that, notwithstanding the obvious merits of such critiques, ethnicity remains a powerful organising principle in social life: in addition to ordering the world at a cognitive level, ethnic boundaries contain networks and moral communities based on trust and obligations, cultural resources and 'social insurance' systems. At the level of the individual, membership in an ethnic group offers a certain opportunity structure; at the level of greater society, there are more often than not clear correlations between occupation, mobility and social rank on the one hand and ethnic distinctions on the other.

One of the most complex, and controversial, aspects of ethnicity concerns its relationship to culture. I have noted time and again in this chapter that it is necessary to take the cultural dimension of ethnic identity seriously. Of course its significance varies, but there are often systematic differences between the groups that make up a society concerning language, forms of socialisation and, not least, microeconomic history. If cultural resources are granted importance in studies of ethnic entrepreneurship and social mobility, then arguments about 'cultures of poverty', frequently dismissed as victim-blaming, also need to be taken seriously: if cultural resources can help an ethnic group economically, then it goes without saying that cultural resources can equally well limit the performance of its members. Whether they do or not is a matter of empirical enquiry, and one of the enduring insights from studies of ethnic complexity is that the practical implications of a particular cultural universe vary from context to context. People from the same castes and from the same parts of India, who migrated at the same time under the same circumstances, eventually became small planters in Trinidad, politicians in Mauritius and entrepreneurs in Fiji.

References

Banks, M. 1996. *Ethnicity: anthropological constructions*. London: Routledge.

Barth, F. 1956. Ecological relations of ethnic groups in Swat, north Pakistan. *American Anthropologist* 58: 1079–89.

Barth, F. 1969a. Pathan identity and its maintenance, In *Ethnic groups and boundaries* (ed.) F. Barth. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Barth, F. (ed.) 1969b. *Ethnic groups and boundaries*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Baumann, G. 1996. *Contesting culture: discourses of identity in multi-ethnic London*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cohen, A. 1969. *Custom and politics in urban Africa*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Cohen, A. 1981. *The politics of elite culture: explorations in the dramaturgy of power in a modern African society*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Cohen, A.P. 1985. *The symbolic construction of community*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
Dahya, B. 1974. The nature of Pakistani ethnicity in industrial cities in Britain. In *Urban ethnicity* (ed.) A. Cohen. London: Tavistock.
Eidheim, H. 1971. *Aspects of the Lappish minority situation*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
Enzensberger, H.M. 1993. *Aussichten auf den Bürgerkrieg*. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp. (Published in English as *Civil War*. Harmondsworth: Penguin. 2004.)
Epstein, A.L. 1992. *Scenes from African urban life: collected Copperbelt essays*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
Eriksen, T.H. 1988. *Communicating cultural difference and identity: ethnicity and nationalism in Mauritius*. (Occasional Papers 16) Oslo: University of Oslo Department of Social Anthropology.
Eriksen, T.H. 1992. *Us and them in modern societies: ethnicity and nationalism in Trinidad, Mauritius and beyond*. Oslo: Scandinavian University Press.
Eriksen, T.H. 1998. *Common denominators: politics, ideology and compromise in Mauritius*. Oxford: Berg.
Eriksen, T.H. 2002. *Ethnicity and nationalism: anthropological perspectives*. (2nd ed.) London: Pluto.
Fenton, S. 1999. *Ethnicity: race, class and culture*. London: Macmillan.
Friedman, J. 1990. Being in the world: globalization and localization. In *Global culture* (ed.) M. Featherstone. London: Sage.
Fuglerud, Ø. 1999. *Life on the outside: the Tamil diaspora and long-distance nationalism*. London: Pluto.
Furnivall, J.S. 1948. *Colonial theory and practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Grillo, R. 1998. *Pluralism and the politics of difference: state, culture and ethnicity in comparative perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Haaland, G. 1969. Economic determinants in ethnic processes. In *Ethnic groups and boundaries* (ed.) F. Barth. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
Hall, S. 1980. Race, articulation and societies structured in dominance. In *Sociological theories: race and colonialism* (ed.) UNESCO. Paris: UNESCO.
Handelman, D. 1977. The organization of ethnicity. *Ethnic Groups* 1: 187–200.
Hannerz, U. 1980. *Exploring the city: inquiries toward an urban anthropology*. New York: Columbia University Press.
Harris, N. 2002. *Thinking the unthinkable: the immigrant myth exposed*. London: Tauris.
Harrison, S. 1999. Identity as a scarce resource. *Social Anthropology* 7: 239–52.
Hovland, A. 1996. *Moderne urfolk: Samisk ungdom i bevegelse* ('Modern aborigines: Sami youth on the move'). Oslo: Cappelen Akademisk Forlag.
Lewis, O. 1966. The culture of poverty. *Scientific American* 215: 19–25.
Liebow, E. 1967. *Tally's corner: a study of Negro streetcorner men*. Boston, Mass.: Little, Brown.
Mitchell, J.C. 1956. *The Kalela dance*. (Rhodes-Livingstone papers 27.) Manchester: Manchester University Press.
Paine, R. 1984. Norwegians and Saami: nation state and fourth world. In *Minorities and mother-country imagery* (ed.) G. Gold. St. John's, Newfoundland: Institute of Social and Economic Research, Memorial University of Newfoundland.
Park, R.E. 1952. *Human communities*. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press.
Riccio, B. 1999. Senegalese transmigrants and the construction of immigration in Emilia-Romagna, Italy. Doctoral thesis, University of Sussex.
Smith, M.G. 1965. *The plural society in the British West Indies*. Los Angeles: University of California Press.
Tambs-Lyche, H. 1980. *London Patidars*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
Thuen, T. 1995. *Quest for equity: Norway and the Saami challenge*. St. John's, Newfoundland: Institute of Social and Economic Research, Memorial University of Newfoundland.
Wikan, U. 2002. *Generous betrayal: politics of culture in the new Europe*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Young, C. 1976. *The politics of cultural pluralism*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

23 Environment and economy: mutual connections and diverse perspectives

Eric Hirsch

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first briefly introduces the historical legacy of two Western doctrines that have informed the anthropological study of environment and economy. These are the Lockean doctrine of property and the ascendancy of quantitative over qualitative measurement. The second section focuses, then, on measurement and value. Here it is argued that the way people assess their relations with one another is through the artefacts they create and value, where 'artefacts' are the environment as much as more conventional economic things. In this way there is a mutual connection between environment and economy often not appreciated by anthropology. The third section reviews some of the entities that anthropologists have examined when they have considered the environment. Three related entities are identified as imparting a distinct form to the mutual connections of environment and economy: place, boundary and map. The fourth section considers three case studies that take up the mutual relations of place, boundary and map, as well as illustrating the connections of environment and economy. In a brief conclusion it is noted that the case studies also highlight the contests of quantitative- and qualitative-oriented perspectives on environment and economy in specific contexts, as studied by anthropology.

Historical legacies

An anthropological perspective on environment and economy is difficult to separate from two doctrines that took shape in Western European societies during the early modern period (compare Porter 1999: 424). One is the philosophy of property and political society derived from John Locke. This doctrine legitimated a particular appropriation of nature, formulated in contrast to Native American ecological arrangements (as disclosed in colonial accounts of the time; see Tully 1993: 137–78). Western forms of landscape and power in the New World (and Old World) were thus licensed at the same time that native peoples' forms of landscape and power, part of the subject matter of what appeared as comparative ethnology (anthropology), were inextricably altered or obliterated (see Cronon 1983; Pagden 1982).[1]

In particular, Tully (1993: 156–7) discusses the example of coastal Indians who practised non-sedentary agriculture. English settlers sought to expropriate these lands, thereby saving themselves the work of clearing. They justified the

expropriation by arguing that the Indians' specific form of agriculture – leaving the fields for clam beds each year, not constructing fences and letting the fields rot and compost every three years – were not cultivating the land in a proper fashion. Locke, Tully argues, 'elevates this justification of expropriation to the status of a law of nature: "if either the Grass or his Inclosure rotted on the Ground, or the Fruit of his planting perished without gathering, and laying up, this part of the Earth, not withstanding his Inclosure, was still to be looked on as Waste, and might be the Possession of any other"'.

The second doctrine is that of quantitative measurement, associated with objectivity and trust in numbers. This is a core feature of the rise both of modern science as much as of the modern bureaucratic state. A mathematical, quantitative conception of the world came to predominate in science; similarly, new forms of measurement were sought by state regimes to make administration, commerce and industry more scientific, standardised and regulated by a single authority (Kula 1986; Mirowski 1989: 116, 138, 399; Putnam 1981: 75). By the nineteenth century these notions, previously found primarily among the elite, had come to be widely disseminated and taken as conventional among North American and Western European peoples (Cohen 1999; Jacob 1997). The contemporary importance attributed to notions such as 'normal' and 'normality', deriving from the pervasiveness of statistical procedures to assess people, things or the surroundings, is a case in point (see Hacking 1990).

As Putnam (1981: 75) observes, during the seventeenth century Europeans began to write about the physical world as causally closed. This was best expressed in terms of Newtonian physics. The movement of bodies only occurs as the result of the action of some force, and these forces can be described by numbers alone. 'It is important to recognize how very different such a physics, stressing number and precise algorithms for computation as it does, is from the essentially *qualitative* thinking of the middle ages. In medieval thought almost anything could exert an "influence" on anything else' (Putnam 1981: 75, emphasis added). This shift is vividly demonstrated by the metric reforms that followed the French Revolution. As Adler (1995; quoted in Scott 1998: 31–2) notes: 'As mathematics was the language of science, so would the metric system be the language of commerce and industry', serving to unify and transform French society.

The two doctrines became aligned in distinctive ways with respect to environment and economy. So, for example, Scott's influential *Seeing like a state* (1998), which traces the alignment of quantitative measures and state schemes, commences with the case of scientific forestry. This reform of forestry originated in Prussia and Saxony during the eighteenth century, as the state sought to improve forest property along scientific, quantitative lines. Scott (1998: 12) describes how the actual forest tree was replaced by an

abstract tree; a tree which represented a new, scientifically-based vision. 'In state "fiscal forestry"… the actual tree with its vast number of possible uses was replaced by an abstract tree representing a volume of lumber or firewood'. Although Scott contrasts the actual tree with the abstract tree, what has appeared under the regime of scientific forestry is, in particular, a different form of actuality, informed by different notions of measurement. The new actual trees are different from their former (qualitative) incarnation and directed to differently constrained uses. Significantly, then, the state asserts its power over the environment through new forms of measurement.[2]

Measurement and value

As the example of scientific forestry indicates, measurements are acts of power, whether those based on quantitative and abstract standards, such as the rise of scientific forestry, or those more instructed by the qualitative criterion against which the scientific vision was directed. Qualitative measures are relational or commensurable; they depend on the specific context and the persons involved. Quantitative measures seek to be valid regardless of context or person; the aim is scientific objectivity (see Scott 1998: 25). To establish conventions of measurement is to simultaneously organise conceptions of value. The example of scientific forestry illustrates the way in which the surroundings, 'space' and 'nature', are reorganised in order to declare such distinctive (scientific) values. However, there is often a contest between the standards and value promulgated by the modern state and local conventions of measurement and value. Each seeks to secure its own vision regarding the way value is measured and objectified through relations among persons, things and their surroundings.

For the most part, though, anthropology has focused on a narrow conception of the social relations of persons and things in the establishment of value (compare Parry and Bloch 1989; see Alexander chap. 28, Graeber chap. 27 infra); the basis of the anthropology of economy (see Gregory 1997; Gudeman 2001). A definition of economy often used in anthropology is one that highlights the social relations connecting production, circulation and consumption. Gregory and Altman (1989: 1) suggest that 'the categories "production", "consumption" and "circulation" are common to all societies'. However, Wilk has contested this view. He argues that the categories of this circuit are perhaps more arbitrary and ethnocentric than conventionally assumed. He (1996: 31–2, emphasis omitted) proposes a broader, substantive definition of economy: 'The relationship between human beings and the human-produced world of objects, ideas and images'. He elaborates on this definition by contrasting the concerns of ecological anthropology with that of economic anthropology. Wilk suggests that while the former studies the 'natural environment', the latter is interested in the things created by people,

their artefacts. But artefacts, he suggests, are not just material objects. He cites the example of songs, often ascribed substantial value but that do not have a material form. Wilk's interest is to highlight relationships and not simply artefacts. In short, the economy, he (Wilk 1996: 32) argues, is 'the world where human beings are tied to each other through their relationships with things they have created'. Artefacts and social relations in this view are mutually connected, and it is through these associations that people create their distinctive measurements and values.

Where one might take issue with Wilk is his contrast between the concerns of ecological and economic anthropology. As I have said, he suggests that the former studies the natural environment, while the latter the relationships of people as forged through the artefacts they create. But what is the natural environment, if not a series of artefacts created by people? The high media profile Amazonian rainforest is a case in point. This is often viewed as a pristine natural environment in which separate cultures live and draw upon its resources. However, as recent anthropological and archaeological research has shown, the current form of these forests is the outcome of extensive human manipulation over substantial periods of time. In effect, what has been created is a complex array of artefacts, whether grasslands, forests or savannahs (see Baleé 1998). Interestingly, these very places are often a central theme in the songs composed by diverse peoples. Among the Kaluli people of the Papua New Guinean rainforest, for instance, song texts interweave the sounds found in forest places (for example, birds or waterways) with their intricate pattern of placenames (Feld 1996). The so-called 'natural environment' can thus be viewed as a human artefact constituted by a multiplicity of (named) places. In Wilk's terms, it is as much 'economy' as it is 'environment'.

So even though environmental factors such as land fertility or water affect people's economic activities, it is also the case that people's relationships with their environment is what transforms these factors into the form of economy people create for themselves. The environmental factors assume the form of artefacts, such as objects of knowledge, and people relate to one another through these. Although a quantitative perspective often informs Western understanding of such factors (for example, soil chemical composition, rainfall levels), in many societies, including Western ones, this takes a qualitative form, such as detailed local knowledge possessed by elders. In these contexts, the knowledge often derives from the intricate interpretation of seasonality, plant growth and the use of magical formulas and techniques derived from ancestors.

What the above highlights is that the conventional anthropological focus eclipses the significance of the local environment (such as landscape organisation) to the establishment of value. In short, people assess and value themselves as much through their landscape organisation as they do through

their social organisation. People attain power in their dealing with others in the way they make the persons, things and places of their lives appear.

Consider another example from Papua New Guinea. Among Fuyuge speakers of highland Papua, value is ascribed to the organisation and enactment of a collective performance or ritual known locally as *gab*. The ritual comprises the transaction and circulation of persons (for example, in rites of initiation or marriage) and of things (such as bird plumes, money or pigs) at distinct periods of *gab* performance; a ritual which extends over many months. But this social organisation concurrently presupposes a landscape organisation. A *gab* commences when trees known as *hoyan*, which grow deep in the forest, are cut and placed around the plaza where the performances are presented. These trees were 'chased' into the forest as described in a Fuyuge mythic narrative (known as *tidibe*). Once the trees are placed around the plaza, pigs are killed and distributed through acts of exchange. It is these acts of exchange that have been the primary focus of anthropology, and yet from a Fuyuge perspective the movement of things between places is as significant as that between persons. Each form of movement begets the conditions for the other. At every subsequent moment of *gab* where transactions are conducted, the persons and things concerned are mobilised with reference to named places and roads. This landscape is as much a part of the social relations as the social relations are a part of the landscape.

Historical investigation shows that aspects of *gab* have altered in conjunction with colonial and mission influences within the region, beginning late in the nineteenth century. These agencies sought to change the social arrangements of Fuyuge speakers, and this entailed transforming their landscape as well: roads were constructed into the sides of the mountains; parishes and mission stations built; districts and government patrol posts founded. These achievements were instructed by ideals and myths of the colonial and mission agencies that parallel Fuyuge concerns with enacting their mythic narratives in *gab*. Whether considering the Fuyuge or the agencies which settled among them, the capacity to measure and value their actions required attention to landscape arrangements as much as social arrangements (see Hirsch 2003). However, among the notable differences between the arrangements of the Fuyuge speakers and the colonial and mission agencies, one derives from the allied doctrines noted above. This is the way social and environmental organisation are perceived as relatively separate domains and each is informed by quantitative values: a form of what Scott (1998) refers to as 'seeing like a state' (compare Ingold 2000: 209–18).[3]

Anthropological analysis and its entities

The idea of environment, introduced by Thomas Carlyle, drew on established concepts such as (picturesque) landscape to assert its presence (see note 1).

Carlyle articulated a Romantic lament to the legacy of Locke and to the industrialisation of the age. It is only in recent years that anthropology has fashioned a lexicon for the analysis of environmental matters. This is due, in part, to the way anthropologists have explicitly come to recognise the partiality of their understandings of local conventions. This shift from 'totalizing, internally coherent systems' (Rumsey 2000: 37) has meant that the details of places, the groundedness of knowledge, has appeared more significant. How people, whether anthropologists or those they live among, perceive and understand their world derives from how they are placed in that world.[4]

This has been articulated in different ways, and related concepts have been fashioned and deployed by anthropology for this purpose. So, while some anthropological analyses emphasise environment, they simultaneously draw upon associated concepts such as landscape and place. Ingold suggests that environment and landscape are related as function to form. To speak of environment is to highlight what is afforded to creatures (human and non-human) 'with certain capabilities and projects of action' (Ingold 2000: 193); 'nature organised by an organism' (2000: 193, quoting Lewontin 1982: 160; compare Rabinow 1989). The recent growth of interest in the environment and environmentalism focuses most specifically on the functional conception, what is required by an organism to live and flourish, and the threats to this livelihood (compare Grove 1995; Milton 1993). Landscape is the form these surroundings assume, the outcome of everyday bodily movement and engagement. But as Ingold (2000: 193) acknowledges, the distinction between environment and landscape is 'not easy to draw and for many purposes they may be treated as practically synonymous'.

The same is true, for instance, if the starting point is landscape, place or space. For instance, Ellen's introductory essay to *Redefining nature* draws on discussions of environment, ecology and landscape, among other related concepts. As he notes, anthropological use of these concepts raises an important question: 'how large a part of the total assemblage of meanings must we be able to identify in other cultures to speak with confidence of their having such notions?' (Ellen 1996: 4, quoting Strathern 1980: 176). To ask this question is to engage with the legacies which have shaped the world studied by anthropology, as much as shaping the discipline of anthropology itself. It is by recasting indigenous notions and analytical concepts in terms of the light they may throw on each other that anthropology can succeed in its widest goal as a comparative discipline (see Hirsch 1995).

Within this comparative enterprise three entities are most significant with respect to the anthropological study of environment and economy. These entities impart a distinct form to the shared links between environment and economy. The first of these is place and the interconnections between places. The second is that of boundary, which renders evident the relationships

between inside and outside. The third is that of map, which represents the configuration of places and their boundaries.[5] Each of the entities is centrally connected with the way people measure and value themselves within a particular environment-landscape; each provides a vantage point to consider the others and can be viewed as an expansion or contraction of the others (compare Strathern 1988: 187). Feld and Basso (1996: 9) have argued that place is 'the most fundamental form of embodied experience'. However, a place never exists on its own, but always in connections with other places, linked by paths or roads that facilitate movement. It is through such movement that places are arranged into relevant units of relative size (for example, hamlets, villages, regions, towns, cities, states and so on), where boundaries are created to separate sets of places (and people) from one another. Finally, the capacity of people to move and interact within and between places and their boundaries presupposes the existence of maps. Maps can be both artefactual and cognitive and each exhibits a formal similarity (see Gell 1985; compare Ingold 2000: 219–42).[6] The three entities, then, take form in and give form to particular landscapes. At the same time, the entities are an index of local measures and values and what is constituted as economy.

Case studies: place, boundary and map

In this section I consider three case studies that illustrate the mutual relation between environment and economy: how place, boundary and map impart a distinct form to this relation. The first case considers hill sheep farms in the Scottish Borders. Only hardy, pure-bred hill sheep are able to graze in these places and they need subsequent fattening-up for market on lowland farms. The example illustrates the way places and boundaries are formed, and how implicit maps operate in this distinctive economy based on harsh, marginal lands. There is a very real contrast between the hill farms and the quantitatively more productive lowland farms, with their capital-intensive farming techniques. The second case is from Guinea. Like the Scottish Borders example, distinctive forms of place, boundary and map materialise through the way people assess themselves and create value in a forest–savannah environment. However, this landscape has been misread for many decades by distant policy makers and politicians. Instead of perceiving an environment of productive 'forest islands', outsiders see an endangered, de-forested savannah, a relic of an extensive natural forest that was destroyed by farming and fire-setting. The elaborate boundaries sustained between forest and savannah are an economic strategy, not evidence of long-term environmental decline. The third case is a dispute involving maps and local resources from the Lake Titicaca region of Peru. Like the West African example, a quantitatively-informed outlook represents places and boundaries very differently from the local, qualitative outlook. Whereas the peasants in and around the lake have

long used and cultivated it for reeds, the Peruvian state decreed this a conservation area and instituted radical measures for the local and translocal use of this resource. The dispute highlights virtually incommensurable views about the way the resources of a distinctive environment are transformed into economic value.

Places on the Scottish border

The Scottish Borders, as the name suggests, is an area in Scotland just north of the English border. The area maintains a lively interest in its history of cross-border raiding from several centuries ago. Today, as in the past, the principal mode of local livelihood is breeding sheep and selling lambs; nowadays the lambs are sold for food in the United Kingdom and the European Community. The anthropologist John Gray studied an area in this region know as Teviothead that straddles 'the 18 kilometer stretch of the River Teviot from its source to the mill town Hawick' (Gray 1999: 444). The farms in this area range from 160 to over 2000 hectares and the flocks are similarly varied: from 450 to 2000 breeding ewes. It is a hilly terrain in parts, reaching 600 metres at the watershed of the river. As the river valley widens the hills decrease in height and density (1999: 444). Gray's research focused on the livelihood of hill farms in this border region. His work highlights the connections between environment and economy created in these 'marginal' lands. The sheep and land are seen by the farmers less as economic resources and more as parts of a distinctive way of life, separate from the surrounding towns and more intensively farmed lowlands: 'Hill lambs are less commodities than they are symbols of hill sheep people and their way of life' (1999: 445).[7]

Gray describes how hill sheep farmers distinguish between outbye and inbye land, based on their physical characteristics. Inbye land is flatter and thus more amenable to the quantitative value of capitalist agricultural techniques (Gray 1999: 445). Outbye land is found in the hill areas and is subject to the more qualitative arrangements he documents. It is categorised by the European Community Common Agricultural Policy as a 'Less Favoured Area', where 'the quality of the land imposes the most severe restrictions for agricultural use' (Gray 1999: 444). As Gray suggests, the two types of land thus enables two different potentials to be realised (compare Hirsch 1995). This is also revealed in the different auctions at which sheep are sold. 'Fat market auctions' are generally for sheep raised on inbye land, while 'store market auctions' are for sheep raised on outbye land and requiring further fattening. Associated with the contrast between outbye and inbye are a number of other notions which convey how places and boundaries are formed, and how these are organised into map-like entities enabling navigation and movement.

Outbye land is perceived locally as wild terrain, as more difficult to control. This perception is central to the way places are formed. It is through the relations between the shepherds that work the land and the sheep that places materialise. It is these relations that form the basis of the hill sheep economy. 'Hirsel' is the name given to the places a shepherd works with his sheep. Hirsels are places and interconnecting paths that allow the sheep to be seen. Being able to see and recognise sheep is very important and a key quality of an effective shepherd. Smaller named areas within a hirsel are called 'cuts'. A good shepherd is able to recognise his sheep and their specific characteristics easily. Such a shepherd is known locally as a good 'kenner'. 'Going around the hills consists of seeing and gathering the sheep, terrain and people into the totality of the "hirsel"' (Gray 1999: 450). A hirsel, then, emerges from the complex relations among shepherd, sheep and place. This process is known locally as 'hefting on', and the sheep so attached to a configuration of places is known as the 'heft' or 'cut'. Shepherds work to maintain their cuts, which is the foundation of their economic livelihood. The shepherding task is one devoted to keeping the sheep in their proper places by gathering them together. Just as sheep tend to bond to particular places, so shepherds come to know these places and thus the sheep, and this ongoing process is what forms and re-forms the hirsel. '[S]imilar processes of place-making occur whether shepherds walk or use a four-wheel bike to go around the hill[s]' (1999: 449).[8]

The places that make up cuts, and thus a hirsel, all have names. The names, as Gray highlights, are crucial to the movement and navigation performed by the shepherds. The names enable a map to be formed for these purposes (Gray 1999: 452). What is crystallised by the names is a complex set of connections between the everyday experiences of the shepherds and the history and myth of 'reiving' (raiding; see above and Gray 1999: 454). The assessments and values locally created are informed by this reiving legacy and the way the hills are currently worked to form its distinctive places.

Forest–savanna boundaries in Guinea

This second case illustrates a comparable contrast between a quantitative outlook to environment and economy and one that emphasises qualitative measures and values. But here it is not two different types of land, as in the Borders example, but the same landscape viewed differently. The case concerns the forest–savannah transition zone studied by the anthropologists James Fairhead and Melissa Leach (1996). They investigated a prefecture in Guinea, West Africa, which consists of patches of dense forest dispersed in savannah.

> The forest patches, which surround old and new village sites, have been considered by environmental policy makers for at least a century as the last and endangered

> relics of a once extensive natural forest cover now destroyed by local farming and fire-setting; a destruction they have continually sought to redress. (Fairhead and Leach 2000: 2)

This distant and 'objective' assessment is informed by a particular Edenic view of African vegetation before its supposed disturbance by humans. The analysis of various quantitative factors such as rainfall levels and the presence of humid forest species are taken as indicative of this past 'climax' vegetation type. However, the study of local conditions reveals a very different situation. Far from being relics of the past, forest islands are an engendered environment that sustain a local economy including rice and cash crops such as coffee, peanuts, cassava and fonio. But to perceive this engendered environment requires examining the qualitative processes whereby these forest islands are produced. Members of one of the groups that reside in this region, the Kuranko, have a saying that translates roughly as, 'prosperity is in the forest' (Fairhead and Leach 1996: 87). Forest islands develop through the everyday activities of men and women. 'Villagers today receive cash from many sources. Incomes from the sale of crops, game, gathered products and day labour in the village at particular times of year are supplemented through other activities' (1996: 135). It is these actions which create the conditions for the emergence of forest islands and the prosperity they embody. In short, the boundaries and connections between forest islands and savannah need to be considered as a social process. Forest islands are created intentionally by villagers. Sometimes this is explicit, such as by planting trees. More usually, though, it is by creating conditions for the soil and for fire, which assists with the regeneration of forest in a savannah area.

The siting of settlements is a key factor. Villagers deliberately choose sites which will give protection from fires. For this reason, gallery forests or swamps are often chosen as the sites for new settlements. In addition, villagers work, through their everyday activities, to create fire- and wind-breaks by reducing the quantity of grass around a settlement. Grass used for thatch and fencing is collected from these marginal areas and cattle are often tethered here, and their grazing and trampling further reduce the grass. As villagers move in and out of the village they routinely slash any grass. As Fairhead and Leach (1996: 87) note: 'When these everyday activities are judged insufficient to form an adequate fire-break, young men cut one purposefully. Early in the dry season elders may also choose to arrange a controlled burn, which then eliminates the fuel for more threatening late-season fires'.

Implicitly, then, villagers have a conception (a 'map') of the necessary boundaries and relations between forest islands and the surrounding savannah. Ecological processes are 'harnessed' to enable forests or swamps to develop

(Fairhead and Leach 1996: 207). Once a new settlement has adequate protection from fire and wind, then the conditions are engendered for the potential expansion of the forest belt. This process occurs hand in hand with the mundane economic activities of village life: household cooking and crop processing wastes are deposited on the forest margins, as is cooking-fire ash, and people defecate on this area of the developing forest island. In a comparable manner, gardens located behind kitchens become concentrated with social fertility. When these garden sites are abandoned, woody vegetation quickly takes root, further contributing to the lushness of the forest island: 'Indeed, in many cases, new settlements have been established on old garden sites, where inhabitants have found their forest island formation especially rapid' (1996: 87). As Fairhead and Leach demonstrate, far from a past relic, forest islands are the key locus of routine agricultural activities, which can only be sustained by maintaining an adequate fire-free boundary with the adjacent fire-prone savannah. The forest islands are manifestations of a distinct regional economy, and it is in the form of these islands that they generate their sense of economic prosperity.

Map disputes at Lake Titicaca

The final case exemplifies a key issue addressed in the previous example: the substantial difference between outside representations of an environment and its economy and those constructed locally. During the 1970s the Peruvian government established the National Forestry Centre (CENFOR; Centro Nacional Forestal, known by its acronym; Orlove 1991: 6) to regulate natural plant and wildlife resources through the establishment of a series of parks and reserves. The reed beds at Lake Titicaca fell within this scheme, and CENFOR attempted to regulate their harvest. Viewed abstractly, from the perspective of the state, this was an environment in need of protection. However, local peasants harvested them in a way that would assure their regeneration, 'leaving the base of the stem and the roots intact in the muck at the bottom of the lake so that the plant can grow again' (1991: 6). Moreover, these reed beds were used extensively by those peasants 'for many purposes, including thatching houses, making rafts and mats and feeding cattle' (1991: 6), and so figured centrally in their economy.

There is a substantial variation in the availability of *totora* (the Spanish name for the reeds) among the peasant communities. Some are self-sufficient, others have little and again still others have a surplus. It is this differential access to the reeds which creates the conditions for an intricate regional economy: 'Individuals in regions deficient in *totora* often travel to communities with more abundant supplies and pay the community members for the right to harvest', and gifts of coca, alcohol and cash are made for first-time requests (Orlove 1991: 6). The scheme introduced by the state meant that

its institutions would now grant these rights through licences that needed to be applied for. This is the basis of the conflict studied by the anthropologist Ben Orlove (1991).

In the course of this contest several maps were produced by state officials and by the peasants to assert their respective claims. The maps represent different arrangements of places and boundaries which each side to the dispute perceived as relevant. So, for example, before the advent of the reserve 'only the inhabitants of lakeshore communities had cut *totora*' but the legal changes now meant that all Peruvians had this right (Orlove 1991: 10). Thus, in the maps produced by the government, roads are given prominence, while they are absent in the peasant maps. This indicates a significant difference in outlook. For the government, the presence of outsiders (indicated by having maps include neighbouring towns) and access by them (indicated by having roads on the maps) are important. Alternatively, for the peasants, living inside the relevant area, those towns and roads have little relevance. By contrast, the peasant maps emphasise the depiction of equal-sized communities, indicating a self-contained rural area made up of linked local settlements (for example, those resident on floating islands, or those resident on or near the shoreline) that have endured in the area over generations.

The three maps produced for the state, analysed by Orlove (1991: 21–2), emphasise a particular narrative of legal time:

> The first separates the Reserve … from the rest of the lake; the second divides the Reserve into different types of zones; the third allocates portions of certain zones to users under year-long extraction contracts. These three maps, then, correspond to the three activities mentioned in the law that created the Reserve: the 'studies' to determine its border, the 'development' of the Reserve, and its 'administration'. These activities are listed not in a random order but rather in terms of stages of enactment of the law.

The zones, for instance, make sense in terms of an abstract conception of the environment, where the reed beds are divided on the basis of their relative density. But from the peasant perspective, the zones have no real basis and legitimacy. The peasants view their control of the pertinent areas to be ancient and unchanging. This legitimacy derives from several sources and is represented on their maps accordingly. One source is agricultural, where the maps indicate the use of land at varied altitude; a second is political, represented by the position of assemblies and plazas designating authority; the third is ritual, depicted on the peasant maps by the boundary mountains where ceremonies are held at specific times of the year (Orlove 1991: 23).

The upshot of Orlove's analysis is that the quantitative outlook promulgated by the state and the qualitative view adopted by the peasants are so different

as to be virtually incommensurable. Even so, the two sides used these sets of maps in their negotiations over boundaries and the status of the Reserve before it opened (Orlove 1991: 24). As Orlove indicates, both sides to the dispute were able to sustain their particular vision of environment and economy centred around reed use not because they agreed, but largely because the places and boundaries of the peasants were of little interest to anyone except themselves and a distant state bureaucracy.

Conclusion

The three cases elucidate the intricate connections between place, boundary and map on the one hand, and on the other the ways that diverse peoples assess their social relations through the artefacts they create and value. While hill sheep farmers and shepherds raise sheep for market, the creation of this economic value simultaneously engenders a unique landscape: it is the association of these processes that fashions this into a worthwhile livelihood for the local farmers and shepherds alike. Similarly, the everyday economic activities of Guinean villagers – such as rice farming, household gardens or growing coffee and cassava as cash crops – engender the divide between forest and savannah; it is this significant boundary that establishes the prosperity of living in a forest island. Finally, the peasants at Lake Titicaca have fashioned a regional economy based on differential access to the reed beds, where their visions of the local landscape enable the exchange of goods and cash as part of sustaining a valued environmental resource.

The examples also highlight how these views, studied by anthropologists, exist in tension with more distant perspectives on environment and economy. Here the environment as an economic resource is assessed through quantitative, objective standards where the environment is evaluated as a domain separate from the social relations that constitute it. The qualitative perspective, as we have seen, places social relations at the centre of measurements. In this case the environment as an economic resource is an outgrowth of these relations and cannot be evaluated otherwise. These differences in assessment are connected to differences in values, such as the contrast between sheep as a commodity or as part of a way of life, between forest islands as a relic of a pre-human, natural forest cover or the outcome of intentional social–ecological processes or, finally, between reed beds as a potentially endangered national resource in need of conservation or as a carefully cultivated item of exchange and political–ritual importance. The anthropological study of environment and economy, then, attends to both the local and distant perspectives. The environmental entities of place, boundary and map take form in and give form to landscapes; where people gauge their relations with each other and their world through the artefacts they create and value.

Acknowledgement

I thank Allen Abramson for kindly reading a draft of this chapter and for providing very useful comments.

Notes

1. The English notion of environment originates with Thomas Carlyle in the nineteenth century. As Porter (2000) has highlighted, Carlyle's 'environmental' concerns were hardly novel. Similar misgivings, deploying terms allied to the one Carlyle added to the lexicon (for example, landscape, nature), can be found in previous centuries. In addition, the radical alteration of the environment was not restricted to Western societies. The same political and economic philosophy that legitimated the kind of changes decried by Carlyle also figured in the expropriation of lands among non-Western peoples. Tully has argued that Locke's influential 'Two treatises of government' was informed by both Western and non-Western (Native American) conventions of political society and property: 'The reason why Locke's concepts of political society and property are inadequate to represent these two problems of nationhood and property in such a way that they obscure and downgrade the distinctive features of Amerindian polity and property … Locke defines political society in such a way that Amerindian government does not qualify as a legitimate form of political society. Rather, it is constructed as a historically less developed form of European political organization located in the later stages of the 'state of nature' and thus not on a par with modern European political formations … Locke defines property in such a way that Amerindian customary land use is not a legitimate type of property. Rather, it is construed as individual labour-based possession and assimilated to an earlier stage of European development in the state of nature, and thus not on equal footing with European property' (Tully 1993: 138–9; see Cronon 1983).
2. The emergence of scientific forestry did not occur in isolation from the transformations of German 'wilderness' and the myths that instructed those changes. The reclassification of the forest was the outcome of Enlightenment scientific myths contending with more ancient ones. 'For much of the Middle Ages, hairy, cannibalistic, sexually omnivorous wild men and women had represented the antithesis of the civilised Christian. But beginning in the later part of the fifteenth century – the same period that saw the reappearance of the *Germania* [ancient German myths] – wild men were made over into exemplars of the virtuous and natural life' (Schama 1995: 97). The wild men and the ancient Germans merged within the enclaves of the forest itself. This is exemplified in the early sixteenth-century paintings of Albrecht Altdorfer. In *St. George and the Dragon* 'the conventions of ornamental church foliage [are transcribed] directly to the painting, thereby creating a consecrated space' (Schama 1995: 99). Altdorfer's paintings portray the German forests as the authentic form of German scenery. However, by the time this occurred these very forests were themselves fast diminishing as they were mapped and cut down; the advent of scientific forestry was on the horizon.
3. There is a need, then, to attend to the historical legacy noted above, and the way this is implicated locally. At the same time, though, attention must be devoted to local perspectives without reducing these to the effects of the Western doctrines. Anthropology thus deals with what are in effect entangled environments or landscapes. Thomas (1991) has argued the case for 'entangled objects', but such objects presuppose landscapes that have become entangled.
4. Not only are these perceptions emplaced, but they are informed by myth. Giambattista Vico argued that knowledge was mythopoetic: the world it describes is inseparable from the poetic techniques (the figures of speech) used in its production (compare Abramson and Theodossopoulos 2000).
5. Each of these give form to what I have referred to elsewhere as the relationship of 'foreground actuality' and 'background potentiality' (Hirsch 1995). This characterises the scales or measures by which people organise their lives. Foreground actuality is the scale of event-filled, concrete bonds of persons. Background potentiality is the scale insensitive to the detailed bonds, allowing the work of the imagination and of timeless possibilities. Both scales operate in conjunction with one another. Recall the example from Fuyuge. Actual trees are cut and physically arranged to commence the ritual. At the same time, the work to procure

these trees is informed by the possibilities encoded in the mythic narrative. It is through the connections between such actualities and potentialities that landscapes are formed. Landscape can thus be described as a process; landscapes demonstrate a temporality (see Ingold 2000: 189–208; compare Gell 1992: 218).

6. Ingold (2000: 219) argues that 'places do not have locations but histories'. By this he means that people living in a landscape know the places through the history of the journeys they have made. In this way ordinary wayfinding, he suggests, is more like 'storytelling' than map using: wayfinding has the character of 'flow', the manner in which a narrative seems to move effortlessly along when told. But, contrary to Ingold, places have *both* locations and histories. Histories are events which have *taken place* in a sequence, a before and an after. In short, histories are predicated on a temporal location. If places are history-like then they are certainly located in relation to other places. Ingold radically separates wayfinding (as 'mapping', an inscriptive process) from navigation (as 'map-using', a representational process). He takes issue with Gell's (1985) theory of navigation, based as it is on an analytical distinction between images (the context-based knowledge of places and their configuration) and maps (context-free knowledge of places and their configuration). Whereas Gell highlights the mutual implications of images and maps in navigation, Ingold argues that movement in a familiar environment is an unmediated flow; navigation, as such, does not occur. The contrast Ingold draws between flows, images and maps is surely correct. However, the contrast, and the argument Ingold sustains, does not tell us how new places, even in a familiar landscape, become themselves familiar. At particular moments people do need to *navigate* in a familiar landscape if they become lost or disoriented or if they take a new route. Images such as landmarks need to be conjured up in order to properly navigate, to find one's way. Gell's point is that the capacity to transform the unfamiliar into the familiar depends on implicit spatial knowledge conventions: the mutual relations between images and maps. Gell would undoubtedly agree with Ingold's notion of mapping, what conventionally happens in a familiar landscape (Gell 1985: 278–80). The advantage of Gell's theory, though, is that it can account for knowledge of both familiar and unfamiliar places in comparable terms. Moreover, it highlights the formal similarities between artefactual maps and 'the vast majority of maps that have ever been produced in human societies … [which] have been improvised on the spot within a particular dialogic or storytelling context, and without any intention for their preservation or use beyond that context' (Ingold 2000: 233; see Munn 1973). It should also be noted that Gell highlights these formal similarities in order to critique the 'primitive mentality' thesis propounded by Hallpike (1979), which advocated a fundamental separation in cognitive abilities between so-called 'primitive' and modern peoples (see Frake 1985). Gell's point is that the most 'primitive' map is *formally* no different from the most 'sophisticated' cartographically-produced version.
7. Locally, people distinguish between farmers and shepherds. Farmers own the sheep and often the farm (or are tenants). Shepherds are hired by farmers to take care of the sheep. Even where there are hired shepherds, farmers do some or most of the work with the sheep. In this way, Gray's account of the relations of shepherd and sheep applies to farmers as well.
8. Gray notes that by the mid-1990s over half the hill shepherds used four-wheel motorbikes to go around the hills. The shepherds he interviewed said that use of a bike did not greatly affect their relations with the land or its topographical features. Rather, the use of bikes enabled fewer shepherds to cover a larger number of sheep; their use allowed for greater efficiency and lower labour costs.

References

Abramson, A. and D. Theodossopoulos (eds) 2000. *Land, law and environment: mythical lands, legal boundaries*. London: Pluto.

Adler, K. 1995. A revolution made to measure: the political economy of the metric system in France. In *The values of precision* (ed.) N. Wise. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Baleé, W. 1998. Historical ecology: premises and postulates. In *Advances in historical ecology* (ed.) W. Balee'. New York: Columbia University Press.

Cohen, P. 1999. *A calculating people: the spread of numeracy in early America*. London: Routledge.
Cronon, W. 1983. *Changes in the land: Indians, colonists, and the ecology of New England*. New York: Hill & Wang.
Ellen, R. 1996. Introduction. In *Redefining nature: ecology, culture and domestication* (eds) R. Ellen and K. Kukui. Oxford: Berg.
Fairhead, J. and M. Leach 1996. *Misreading the African landscape: society and ecology in a forest–savanna mosaic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Fairhead, J. and M. Leach 2000. Webs of power: forest loss in Guinea. *Seminar* 486 (February): 1–17. (http://www.india-seminar.com) (Also as 1997. Webs of power and the construction of environmental policy problems: forest loss in Guinea. In *Discourse of development: anthropological perspectives* (eds) R. Grillo and J. Stirrat. London: Pluto.)
Feld, S. 1996. A poetics of place: ecological and aesthetic co-evolution in a Papua New Guinea rainforest community. In *Redefining nature: ecology, culture and domestication* (eds) R. Ellen and K. Kukui. Oxford: Berg.
Feld, S. and K. Basso (eds) 1996. *Senses of place*. Santa Fe: School of American Research.
Frake, C.O. 1985. Cognitive maps of time and tide among medieval seafarers. *Man* (n.s.) 20: 254–70.
Gell, A. 1985. How to read a map: remarks on the practical logic of navigation. *Man* (n.s.) 20: 271–86.
Gell, A. 1992. *The anthropology of time: cultural constructions of temporal maps and images*. Oxford: Berg.
Gray, J. 1999. Open spaces and dwelling places: being at home on the hill farms in the Scottish borders. *American Ethnologist* 26: 440–60.
Gregory, C. 1997. *Savage money: the anthropology and politics of commodity exchange*. Amsterdam: Harwood.
Gregory, C. and J. Altman 1989. *Observing the economy*. London: Routledge.
Grove, R. 1995. *Green imperialism: colonial expansion, tropical island Edens and the origins of environmentalism, 1600–1860*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Gudeman, S. 2001. *The anthropology of economy: community, market, and culture*. Oxford: Blackwell.
Hacking, I. 1990. *The taming of chance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Hallpike, C.R. 1979. *Foundations of primitive thought*. Oxford: Clarendon.
Hirsch, E. 1995. Landscape: between place and space. In *The anthropology of landscape: perspectives on place and space* (eds) E. Hirsch and M. O'Hanlon. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Hirsch, E. 2003. A landscape of powers in highland Papua, c. 1899–1918. *History and Anthropology* 14: 3–22.
Ingold, T. 2000. *The perception of the environment: essays on livelihood, dwelling and skill*. London: Routledge.
Jacob, M. 1997. *Scientific culture and the making of the industrial West*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Kula, W. 1986. *Measures and men*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Lewontin, R. 1982. Organism and environment. In *Learning, development and culture* (ed.) H. Plotkin. Chichester: Wiley.
Milton, K. (ed.) 1993. *Environmentalism: the view from anthropology*. London: Routledge.
Mirowski, P. 1989. *More heat than light: economics as social physics: social physics as nature's economics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Munn, N. 1973. *Walbiri iconography: graphic representation and cultural symbolism in a Central Australian society*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
Orlove, B. 1991. Mapping reeds and reading maps: the politics of representation in Lake Titicaca. *American Ethnologist* 18: 3–38.
Pagden, A. 1982. *The fall of natural man: the American Indian and the origins of comparative ethnology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Parry, J. and M. Bloch (eds) 1989. *Money and the morality of exchange*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Porter, R. 1999. Afterword. In *Geography and enlightenment* (eds) D. Livingstone and C. Withers. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Porter, R. 2000. 'In England's green and pleasant land': English enlightenment and the environment. In *Culture, landscape and the environment* (eds) K. Flint and H. Morphy. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Putnam, H. 1981. *Reason, truth and history*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rabinow, P. 1989. *French modern: norms and forms of the social environment*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Rumsey, A. 2000. Tracks, traces, and links to land in Aboriginal Australia, New Guinea, and beyond. In *Emplaced myth: space, narrative and knowledge in Aboriginal Australia and Papua New Guinea* (eds) A. Rumsey and J. Weiner. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Schama, S. 1995. *Landscape and memory*. London: HarperCollins.

Scott, J. 1998. *Seeing like a state: how certain schemes to improve the human condition have failed*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.

Strathern, M. 1980. No nature, no culture: the Hagen case. In *Nature, culture and gender* (eds) C. MacCormack and M. Strathern. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Strathern, M. 1988. *The gender of the gift: problems with women and problems with society in Melanesia*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Thomas, N. 1991. *Entangled objects: exchange, material culture, and colonialism in the Pacific*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tully, J. 1993. *An approach to political philosophy: Locke in contexts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wilk, R. 1996. *Economies and cultures: foundations of economic anthropology*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview.

PART V

ISSUES

Introduction

Certain topics within economic anthropology are issues. They can be so because they are the focus of dispute or uncertainty, or because they attract a wave of interest. Part V is devoted to some of these topics, though because of their diverse foci they resist ready summary. The part begins with a consideration of ethics, and especially the ethics associated with different sorts of economic activity. Then come two chapters that touch on the issue of peasants in different ways. One is concerned with peasant households and their relationship with markets, focusing on the Andean region; the other is a synthesis of sub-disciplinary attempts to understand the peasantry. Then come two chapters that look at value in different ways, and one that traces the problematic relationship between anthropology and development projects.

24 Economic anthropology and ethics

Peter Luetchford

As normally understood, ethics is a branch of philosophy; it is 'philosophical thinking about morality, moral problems, and moral judgements' (Frankena 1973: 4). In this guise ethical concerns pursue the enlightenment goal of establishing a rational and hence universal morality, founded upon an agreed human nature. The problem, and one that has been exposed from within philosophy itself, is that no generally acceptable criteria for justice have yet been established. Instead of rationality we have philosophical traditions, each claiming precedence over others, but with little consensus about what the basis for moral judgements should be (MacIntyre 1988; Wilson 1997).

In economics the dominant trend is likewise constructed around a universal model of human nature, which threatens to unravel under scrutiny. By using an anthropological perspective on the ethic underpinning the market, or that form of market activity which emerged in Western Europe some three hundred years ago, we can begin to see it as just one possible way economic life might be arranged and a particular distribution justified. In this way a universal and supposedly natural model of the economy is denaturalised and becomes historical (Roseberry 1997: 252). But the Western idea of the market also has importance as it is a common point of departure for anthropologists in their studies of specific economies, and moral precepts and ideas are often drawn in contrast to this economic model. It seems that even anthropologists, in the study of non-Western and non-capitalist societies, find it difficult to escape the use of economic definitions appropriate to capitalism.

The main aim of my analysis is to indicate anthropological work that has grappled with morally-inspired conceptions of the world or made critical commentary upon the problem of social provisioning, encompassing production, exchange and consumption. One part of this project involves demonstrating that key conceptual categories in economic anthropology, such as the market, capitalism, gifts, commodities and money, take form and only have meaning within particular cultural contexts. However, one danger in this project is that it leads to a position of extreme relativism, in which anything goes, all opinions and values have equal weight, and ethics comes to have no meaning.

If a universal model of the economy and of ethics is untenable, then we need to turn to the role played by morality and notions of justice in social life. This requires us to recognise that ethical ideas involve dispute, politics and power

relations; in effect, prevailing ideas are a reflection of the interests of the powerful, who use ethics to justify particular social and economic arrangements (Harvey 1993: 49–50). Consideration must therefore be given to the political possibilities that emerge in the practice of anthropology, which entails a critique of the model of the free market, and the social relations and economic conditions that emerge from it.

The market, libertarian ethics and the liberal response

To understand the links between ethics and economic anthropology we need first to comprehend Western ideas on the economy. In this respect a story comes down to us of an invisible hand guiding outcomes and influencing our economic fortunes. The metaphor of the invisible hand, central to the Euro-American model of the capitalist market, leads us to understand economic processes as dependent upon individual choices, yet beyond human will or control. This combination suggests a higher order, a natural truth, and gives the model appeal; after all, we make choices but the outcomes of our decisions are unpredictable, and so the market 'decides'. For this reason it may be that certain readers will consider an attempt to establish a connection between economics and ethics a strange undertaking. The economy, it is thought, is impersonal and so precludes notions of moral responsibility; to function properly the only economic imperative is self-interest. In looking after ourselves and disregarding the needs of others we promote general economic growth and, paradoxically, everyone benefits.[1]

The ethic informing this view is clearly discernible in the sources most often cited in anthropological studies of the origins of the Euro-American model of the economy: Adam Smith's *The wealth of nations*, published in 1776, and Bernard Mandeville's *Fable of the bees*, published in 1714 (for example, Carrier and Miller 1999: 30–31; Dilley 1992b: 6). The puzzle these writers addressed concerned the kind of economic arrangements that would allow humanity to flourish. However, the answer they provided departs radically from earlier solutions such as feudalism, which entailed a despotic economy and a natural hierarchy of human worth. Rather than looking to a fixed set of social relations, eighteenth-century economists pointed to individual freedom and human nature. Famously, for Smith, people have a natural propensity to 'truck, barter and exchange', and the self-interest that inspires this proclivity drives the economy and promotes general well-being.

These ideas have provided the basis for dominant economic paradigms in the world today, and have thoroughly infused Western society since their inception, but perhaps particularly so since the 1980s. In neoclassical economics, for example, ethics in the economy dictate that we should allow individuals to follow their self-serving nature, which, in turn, will benefit all.[2] In philosophy this is the libertarian position, often now associated with Robert

Nozick (1974). Libertarianism promotes the standard of individual rights, chiefly the freedom to exercise one's capabilities, and the entitlement to the minimum protection of the state to secure that right. For economic policy makers this means the promotion of the ideals of complete market deregulation, consumer sovereignty, the decrying of taxation and the maximisation of choice (Harvey 1993: 62). The ethic is one of personal achievement and merit,[3] and it has come to be synonymous with the profit motive.

For many anthropologists, economics and the philosophy that surrounds it erroneously presents market capitalism as natural, and obscures constraint and exploitation. Instead, it is argued, the economy must be understood within specific social and cultural locations; that is, in Karl Polanyi's (1957) terms, economics is 'embedded' in society (see Isaac chap. 1 supra). On this view, ethics does not derive from formal rationality or human nature, but entails a social and cultural relation between persons.[4] Succinctly put, economics is cultural and social, and so is morality.

The Western market economy is not exempt from this assertion. A number of arguments can be made against the formal understanding of the capitalist market and its operation. Perhaps the most persuasive is that the model bears little relation to actually existing markets; a great many studies demonstrate that people in different places and at different times respond to, evaluate and construct markets in a multitude of ways, according to social and cultural context (see Dilley 1992a). Persuasive evidence can also be mustered to demonstrate that the economists' model of Western capitalist markets is itself logically inconsistent and a false description of economic operations and motives (Preston 1992).

An alternative perspective is similarly articulated in moral philosophy by those concerned with the deleterious effect that our activities can have on others. A prime example of this thinking is provided by John Rawls in his *A theory of justice* (1971). His worry was that the promotion of maximisation countenanced the sacrifice of the less well off to the majority interest. Where the aim is to protect choice and ensure efficiency, contingent factors (such as inherited wealth, natural talents and good fortune) determine life chances, and such contingency is no basis for a just society. For Rawls (1971: 102), 'the basic structure of societies incorporates the arbitrariness found in nature. But there is no necessity for men to resign themselves to these contingencies. The social system is not an unchangeable order beyond human control but a pattern of human action'. Ethics in this branch of liberal philosophy then becomes a search for maxims that all rational people will agree to, and which establish palliative measures to counteract contingency.

Although many anthropologists would probably stop short of attempting to establish universal ethical criteria, their sympathies tend to lie much closer to

this second strand of ethics. As Joel Kahn (1997) has pointed out, the origins of anthropology lie in the Romantic tradition, which took issue with the idea of a universal rationality and a 'mechanistic science of man', and sought instead to accept and explore human cultural difference. This relativistic vision then becomes the basis for ongoing critiques of the modern world; according to this view, market rationality and its demon companion, capitalism, dehumanises the economy.

Money, commodities and social corrosion

In departing from the dominant model, anthropologists have often presented the market and capitalism as having a negative and corrosive effect on the societies in which they work. Moral appraisal in these writings is generally built around key oppositions. The first of these is the distinction between the value of an object measured by its usefulness on the one hand, and on the other its exchange value, measured in money. A second pits the socialised gift, as representative of the 'give and take' of social relations, against the impersonal commodity, which provides an avenue for buying and selling for profit, and so allows autonomous individuals to maximise self-interest, and hence undermines moral and social relationships and communities.

Perhaps the best-known ethnographic work in this vein is Michael Taussig's (1980) study of commodity fetishism in Latin America. His account is based on Colombian plantation workers who believe that individuals enter into pacts with the devil to increase their productivity and wages, and on Bolivian tin miners who make offerings to the devil figure said to inhabit the mine in which they work, in exchange for knowledge concerning the whereabouts of deposits of ore. However, these Faustian agreements are dangerous and unproductive. The devil *Tío*, who inhabits the mine, is bloodthirsty and needs appeasing, and the pacts made by the plantation workers are ultimately barren. For Taussig these beliefs are evidence that the indigenous miners of Bolivia, and black, Christian peasantries working on plantations, both associate capitalist relations with the devil. They are local moral metaphors for the destructive power of capitalism and its propensity to desocialise economic relations.

Central to Taussig's argument is the difference between two transactional orders, one based on use value, the other on exchange value. Whereas the former is limited by what can be used and establishes ethical relationships among people, and between people and things, commodities are said, during the act of exchange, to become depersonalised. The vehicle for the exchange of impersonal commodities is money, which provides a standard for disparate qualities to be compared, a point that was also accepted by Karl Marx (2000 [1846]: 202), who argued that money was 'the representative of the value of all things, people and social relations'. Money, by providing a universal measure for the comparison of values, is deemed corrosive to social and moral

relations, as the distinctive quality of objects and people is lost in the commodity form. In purchasing an object we see only the finished good, and not the raw materials, the manufacturing process or the work that went into its production. Further, when they sell their labour for a wage, the worth of workers is reduced to a monetary value that can be compared to that of other workers, or even to goods, through the price they command, so that the unique quality of human beings is obscured by the quantitative measurement of money and the calculation of profit.

The idea that the beliefs of Latin American peasants and miners demonstrate an ability to see beyond appearances, to understand the real nature of capitalism and to criticise it morally through the figure of the devil is compelling. Yet anthropologists have generally rejected Taussig's arguments. In part this is because he stands accused of overimaginative use of ethnography; for example it has been shown that in romanticising the gift and demonising commodities he overdraws the distinction between the two, and fails to recognise that subsistence activities and the inherent dangers of mining as an activity also involve and require pacts with the devil *Tío* and are not simply a reflection on capitalist relations of production (Harris 1989; Sallnow 1989).

What is more, the idea that money acts as an acid that corrodes social relationships is recognised as a culturally specific idea to the West. Numerous examples are documented of money and the market stimulating social life, including kinship relations. A graphic case is presented by Geschiere (1992), who recounts his shock at observing participants at a funeral rite engaging in bargaining over hard currency for the right to buy back a symbolic representation of the body of the deceased. In a similar vein, Bloch (1989) tells of his embarrassment at being offered money on departure from the field, even though he had previously happily accepted hospitality from the same host. It seems that the idea that money should remain an impersonal medium of exchange and pollutes moral relations between people is not universally shared (Bloch and Parry 1989).

If commodities are charged with obscuring the social and moral relations between people, then the opposite might be said for reciprocal bonds founded upon the giving of gifts. Such apparently altruistic acts as providing hospitality and sharing food and space are seen as the very stuff of human economic relationships and provide a moral context to our behaviour. Implicit in this account is the idea, articulated by Marcel Mauss in *The gift* (1954 [1925]; see Yan chap. 15 supra), that giving has a social effect: it sets up a requirement for a return and so establishes and reinforces a relationship. The truth of this dictum on the social nature of the gift has been much discussed in anthropology; Parry (1989), for example, cites the case of ritual giving of *dana* in India, in which the gift embodies pollution or 'poison', should under

no circumstances be returned, and so comes to express social and moral distance.

Much anthropological ink has been spilt in demonstrating that there is no universally accepted form of the market and money, and that they are instead 'culturally constructed' (Bloch and Parry 1989; Dilley 1992a). This being so, we might ask on what grounds we can take up an ethical position at all? There are a number of possible answers to this question. One of the most persuasive starts with the close contact anthropologists develop with their informants, which allows them to see the negative effects market fundamentalism can have on local lives (Barth 1997). If the formal economic view of rational actors ignores the relations of power behind the economy (Friedland and Robertson 1995), and the emphasis on choice denies and obscures economic uncertainty (Carrier 1997; Gudeman 1992), then it should be incumbent on anthropologists to support and 'give voice' to local actors in their struggles for livelihood. To this end it is worth exploring the evaluations of economic processes coming from those marginalised in the economic system. This project is central to the literature on 'moral economies', most commonly associated with E.P. Thompson, whose self-professed aim was to rescue those made redundant by technological progress in the industrial revolution, the victims of economic progress, from 'the enormous condescension of posterity' (1980 [1963]: 14), and engage in a 'history from below' (Wells 1994: 263).

Moral economies and peasantries

A well-known work that relies on the notion of mutual relations between people, set against the destructive force of modernisation and change, is Scott's *The moral economy of the peasant* (1976). In his study of Southeast Asian peasant society, Scott identifies a 'subsistence ethic', which provides the explanatory basis for economic behaviour in the face of upheaval, uncertainty and famine.

The precarious position in which peasants find themselves leads to an aversion to risk, which points to an economic logic at odds with the impulse to maximise. In place of individual self-interest, Scott is concerned to show how 'the right to subsistence is an active moral principle in the little tradition of the village' (1976: 176). In his view the situation of scarcity predetermines the requirement for mechanisms of solidarity between those living 'on the edge'. According to Scott, two key themes emerge. First, 'claims on peasant incomes by landlords, moneylenders, or the state were never legitimate when they infringed on what was judged to be the minimal culturally defined subsistence level'. Second, the right to subsistence is socially and culturally given: 'the product of the land should be distributed in such a way that all were guaranteed a subsistence niche' (1976: 10). This claim fits with my own findings[5] and fits the prescribed ethic in Costa Rica; a Christian morality

among *campesinos* (peasant farmers) demands that all have a right to the fruits of nature, God's gift to mankind, and such access guarantees the minimal requirements for subsistence. For example, food and housing was provided for needy residents, work was offered to the poorer members of the community 'because they needed the income', and land was made available to the landless to plant subsistence crops.

In the case presented by Scott, where peasants are 'up to their neck in water' and whom 'every ripple threatens to drag under', and in my own ethnography, where rural people can in no way be said to be in such a precarious position, there appears to be an ethic of mutuality at work. This suggests that material deprivation alone cannot provide a satisfactory explanation for the 'subsistence ethic'. Rather, we need to consider morally-informed notions of the proper purpose of economic activity, political ideas about how the economy works and how different contributions are assessed and rewards divided.

At issue here is what Evers has dubbed the 'trader's dilemma' (Evers 1994). In *The moral economy of trade*, Evers asserts that trade and profit pose a challenge to the organic peasant community, which is founded on mutual help and solidarity. The demand for profit sits uneasily with the ethic of the community, in which the value of goods is determined by the use to which they can be put rather than the exchange value that can be realised in the market. A trader who buys at the subsistence rate through the activation of reciprocal ties, and then makes a fat profit, is thus seen as betraying the community by moving from values determined by use to those based on exchange. Therefore, 'any trader who wishes to trade with a view to accumulation – the key to the rise of the modern capitalistic world – faced an acute dilemma in regard to the misfit of his ethic of action (personal accumulation) and the ethic of his peasant society (community-distributive solidarity)' (Preston 1994: 48).

Although Evers suggests a number of remedies to this dilemma, I want to focus here on the solution suggested by small farmers in Costa Rica, who claim that the route to justice in exchange is to cut out intermediaries altogether. There are a number of ways in which this might be achieved, depending on the kind of good to be acquired. For the *campesinos*, the most morally-satisfying solution to the problem of the acquisition of goods is to take them directly from the environment, with the producer being also the consumer. In my fieldwork site there is a long tradition of production for consumption, which is maintained to varying degrees; many farmers grow as much of their food requirements as conditions allow, while others are almost completely dependent on retail purchases. In any case, the origins and reproduction of the community are founded upon the necessity for self-sufficiency, which makes the growing of food for consumption powerfully

evocative of the historical experience of self-provisioning.[6] It is also a practice that is actively encouraged at an institutional level by local non-governmental organisations as a way of avoiding the market mechanism and reducing both costs and uncertainty.

The solution offered by production for consumption comes close to the ancient Greek formulation, articulated by Aristotle. His concern was with the moral goal of economic activity, which was to achieve autarky for the house (Booth 1993; Gudeman and Rivera 1990; Parry 1989). The purpose of the self-sufficient household was to allow the master to escape the dull compulsion of material production so he might engage in civic duties and enjoy the good life, even if this freedom was maintained through the despotic institution of slavery. The Greek household, despite the intolerably hierarchical form it took, proffers an alternative moral architecture for the economy, one that is contained and defined by clearly demarcated ends, and so contrasts markedly with the fascination with unlimited growth that we associate with the entrepreneurial spirit of capitalism. For Aristotle, the acquisition of goods was divided into natural and unnatural modes; in *The politics* he proposed a threefold scheme with a descending order of propriety. Most satisfactory, and deemed as synonymous with natural, is direct acquisition from the environment. Following this, and also classified as natural, is the exchange of goods for goods, or money, but only to adjust scarcities in nature; the aim is redistribution in order to meet necessities. Lastly, and regarded as unnatural and therefore morally iniquitous, is trade for profit and the pursuit of monetary gain beyond the satisfaction of need.

The idea of a contained economy, with clearly limited and social ends, emerges in the moral condemnation of trade espoused especially strongly in the medieval period as part of a Christian ethic in the doctrine of the 'just price' (Dilley 1992b; Gudeman and Rivera 1990; Parry 1989). In part this seems to be inspired by a Christian ethic of self-denial as a route to salvation (Dilley 1992b: 4), and the setting of proper limits to accumulation and indulgence, the dangers of avarice and the virtue of thrift (Gudeman and Rivera 1990).

The above concerns emerge clearly in the work of Stephen Gudeman and Alberto Rivera (1990), who present us with an alternative economic ethic based upon the self-limiting end of household reproduction, or the desire to 'maintain the base' (see Gudeman chap. 6 supra). This gives a very different perspective on the market from that predicated upon the natural impulse to exchange for profit. The model of a contained economy, documented by Gudeman and Rivera in rural Colombia, extends throughout the Central American isthmus. The model begins with nature: for rural Colombians, and for that matter, Costa Ricans, the earth contains 'strength', which was placed there by God as part of the divine plan. The purpose of human activity is then

to work the land and so produce, by tapping into the force of nature. In this scheme moral precedence is given to those who work the soil; indeed, the logical conclusion is that only those who labour in and on nature are really working.

At this point it seems that, from the viewpoint of rural producers, the argument can develop in two ways. A more extreme position would claim that intermediaries and merchants do not work in the true sense of the word, and so have no ethical entitlement to the goods they appropriate or the profits generated. By contrast, people who work the soil are entitled either to consume or to sell all they produce. Running in parallel with such a position is a model of the economy as self-limiting; the only moral purpose of the market would be to allow participants to minister to the needs of the house and its reproduction by 'allowing them to purchase what they cannot produce and store what they cannot hold' (Gudeman and Rivera 1990: 143).

An alternative, and perhaps less extreme, standpoint would allow the existence of merchants but contest the division of the spoils of economic activity on the market. Those who work the earth actually produce, intermediaries do not, at least not in the same way, yet a repeated complaint is that the ability of merchants to appropriate wealth far exceeds their economic contribution and is therefore unjust. As one commentator on the Costa Rican situation expressed it: 'the public knows full well that up until now it has been the farmers, or rather their work, that has provided the ladder for the exporters to reach the pinnacle of wealth' (cited in Acuña Ortega 1987: 142, my translation). The first scenario sets up an ideal moral standard of household autonomy against which actual markets and market activities can be judged. The second position suggests a practical politics of engagement in which the aim is to point to injustices in the market and struggle against them.

A key area of contention here is the notion of value. In much of the literature there is a stubborn insistence that money is a transparent indicator of worth, which permits the idea of a 'just price' and 'fair trade' (Alexander 1992: 91). My research with coffee producers and cooperatives in Costa Rica suggests that those growing and processing the crop for Fair Trade outlets deny this ethical component by referring to preferential trade deals as an 'alternative market'. The possibility of a conjunction between ethics and trade is denied, not, however, because self-interest drives the economy as in the Western model, but because ethics lies elsewhere, in relation to production from nature, and is associated with the social reproduction of the household.

The ethical position of peasantries with regard to trade, the resolution to a moral dilemma they find in production for consumption, in the centrality of the household as an economic unit, in the value of nature and in the imperative to live within one's means are all themes with which we might empathise. Such ideas resonate in our own intellectual and moral heritage, which suggests

we might share a 'community of feeling' that allows us to sympathise with those whose livelihoods are threatened by the ethic of efficiency and growth promulgated by market-led capitalism. The effect on producers of coffee prices falling to a thirty-year low, the image of ex-fishermen on Lake Victoria (Southern Africa) scavenging for scraps outside industrial fish-processing plants against which they cannot compete (Barth 1997), the conditions of 'sweatshop' workers in the Philippines and on the American 'broiler-belt' (Harvey 1993), can all scarcely be imagined. Yet simply to condemn these things is not enough; the question is how to proceed. On what can we base an alternative ethic that challenges the prevailing model of ethical conduct?

Reversing the capitalist ethic: ritual economies and consumption

The concern thus far has been to show how peripheral peoples have reacted to Western markets and forms of production and how the critiques they muster are predicated upon and emerge from prior economic forms. Implicit in this account is the idea that capitalism undermines tradition. The assumption is that 'the Midas touch of capitalism immediately destroys local indigenous economies and cultures or transforms them into a standardized form involving private accumulation, rational–legal principles, individual maximisation, and western cultural domination' (Yang 2000: 481).

To counteract this, anthropologists have been increasingly concerned to show how people subvert, challenge or deny capitalist principles by operating under a moral logic from beyond its confines. A classic case is provided by Marshall Sahlins (1994), who documents Eastern attitudes to exchange relations with Europe. The Chinese court saw trade as a tributary relationship in which the highest technological achievements of the industrial revolution were reluctantly accepted in return for permission to buy luxurious Chinese goods. Here the idea of trade oriented to profit is undermined by a worldview that represents exchange as a form of homage.

A more direct critique of capitalist relations is provided by Kahn (1997: 91), when he notes that part and parcel of the recent revival of Islam is the 'conscious opposition to materialism, instrumentalism and the Market … conceived of as a distinctively Western artefact'. In place of self-interested market maximisers, Islamic economists infuse the economy with ideas that emerge from outside it, specifically religious values in which greed is replaced by the moral relations and moral purposes of cooperation within the Islamic community, or *ummat*. As Kahn points out, embedded in this idea is the suggestion of the re-imagining and re-enchantment of the economy, in conscious opposition to the rationality of the market. However, this is not dissimilar in form to the economic practices of peasantries, and in this respect it does not depart radically from the literature on the moral economy of peasant production outlined above.

A more intriguing avenue for subverting capitalism is suggested by Yang (2000), who is interested in the possibilities for reversal of the logic of accumulation afforded by rituals of conspicuous consumption. The best-known example of this in anthropology is the potlatch, in which Native Americans from the northwest coast used the wealth accumulated through trade and wage labour with white settlers to fund acts of ritual destruction. Rather than being motivated by a 'natural' propensity to accumulate and store wealth, these indigenous peoples entered into competitive tournaments in which they destroyed or gave away vast quantities of blankets, food and other valuables in order to gain prestige. Yang cites a similar case of wealthy Chinese in Wenzhou Province burning quantities of paper money and giving away goods; the desire to accumulate wealth is undone by ritual destruction and disdain for material possessions.[7]

Instead of mounting a critique of capitalism from the perspective of production and labour, as Marx had done, Yang is interested in pursuing a line developed from the writings of Jean Baudrillard and Georges Bataille, who focus on the ethic behind acts of consumption. This points to a different motivation for economic activity, in which the compulsion to produce and accumulate for the future is subordinated to the desire to 'live for the present moment through exuberant consumption in the form of excesses of generosity, display, and sacrifice' (Yang 2000: 482). In these ritualised forms of destructive consumption is the possibility of reversing the ethic of production for accumulation and the impersonality of the process of commodification, and replacing it with mechanisms for redistribution and exuberant acts of personal generosity.

At first sight such a project might sound hopelessly idealistic. Yet it is one thing to document and identify processes of domination in political economy and the way this rebounds on issues of class, the environment, and gender and on vulnerable groups and societies (Harvey 1993: 56; Lutz and Nonini 1999: 74); it is quite another to suggest avenues out of the exploitation, marginalisation, powerlessness, violence and cultural imperialism documented and highlighted in anthropological work. If a central failing of economic processes is that the unique quality of people and objects is obscured in the cold calculation of profit, then one solution may be to reintroduce such quality and specificity into relations between people.

In a polemical work, Daniel Miller (1995) has argued that we should now regard consumption as the 'vanguard of history'. By this he means that rather than rely on the coming to consciousness of the working class to bring about revolution, we should instead look to acts of consumption as a potential motor for historical change. There are two main justifications for this: the first relates to the power accorded to consumption in economic orthodoxy, the other concerns the nature of the relationships we hold with objects and people by

and through our existence as consumers (see Colloredo-Mansfeld chap. 13 supra).

One of the principal tenets of economic theory, and a key element in the justification of policy, is the promotion of consumer choice. Such is the power of the consumer that Miller, in promoting his polemic, suggests that the housewife, in making daily decisions as to which products to purchase, is transformed into the 'global dictator' of the fortunes of producers (1995: 8–9). This may be an extreme position, but evidence suggests that activities such as product boycotts, environmental concerns and demands for changes in trade policy can influence policy makers, and manufacturers are sensitive to consumer pressure, exercised through choice.

Attached to the power accorded to consumers in the economy is the moral element behind consumption. In the economic model, decisions are arrived at on the purely rational grounds of maximisation of self-interest: the desire for the best quality at the cheapest price. The demand for cheap goods then drives the competitive mechanisms of capitalism, which forces down prices. This may or may not be an accurate description of the way the economy works; in any case it is reductive of the desires and interests motivating consumers. While the objects and services we consume may not provide the sole locus of our identity, they do say something about who we are and provide a means to express our relationship to specific people and things (Carrier and Miller 1999: 36). This suggests an ethical rather than purely rational content to consumption, and provides a fillip to impersonal and formal commercial relations.

If we increasingly live out our lives and find meaning in relation to the things that we consume, and not through our actions as producers (Miller 1987), then the principal arena in which this is carried out is the household. The ethical content of this part of the economy lies in our activities as shoppers. We balance hedonistic impulses and desires with the supposed virtue of thrift, and it is this that underpins the ongoing material reproduction and moral economy of the household. The purchases we make for ourselves and for others demonstrate our willingness to indulge those closest to us with luxuries and gifts, which establishes a moral relationship with them, but at the same time this frippery is justified by the exercise of thrift and the value for money we seek in acquiring the basic necessities required for the household to maintain itself. Consumption hence constitutes a quintessentially ethical moment in our orientation to the world.

It is at this juncture that politics and power enter the fray. As Miller (1995: 9) points out, there is a fundamental contradiction in our actions as consumers, which drives down prices, and our interests as producers. As labour markets shift and firms practise 'flexible accumulation' to produce ever-cheaper goods but sustain profit margins, it is worker remuneration, health and safety, and job security that are often the first casualties. Anthropologists come closer than

many to seeing and sharing the experiences of workers marginalised by such policies. Harvey (1993: 56) argues that it is incumbent upon 'a politically responsible person to know about and respond politically to all those people who daily put breakfast upon our table, even though market exchange hides from us the conditions of life of the producers'. But what can and should the anthropological contribution to such a politics be?

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter I have argued that in their engagement with the issue of ethics, anthropologists have concerned themselves with critiquing the economic models that have come to dominate the world today. In many ways this is inevitable and it is certainly one starting point for ethics: '[w]e might even say that the ethnographic method finds its greater purpose in its struggle against the heavy currents of colonizing narratives and totalising theories; that it discovers its potential in ideologically motivated travels to other shores' (Battaglia 1999: 119). But in the encounter with other ways of living we should also expect to reflect on our own society, and to seek out ethically-inspired ways to engage with the world. Perhaps the best we can hope for in this project is, as Harvey (1993: 59) has expressed it, that we identify 'the similarities that can provide the basis for differing groups to understand each other and form alliances'.

One such alliance might coalesce around the recognition that our acts of consumption have an ethical content, and that the choices we make have material repercussions for others' efforts to survive. This is something of which economically-marginalised producers are only too aware; coffee farmers know, and like to point out, that whereas the prices they receive fluctuate wildly, the cost of coffee to the consumer remains constant. It is here, and through the dissemination of the ideas of the Fair Trade lobby, that their ideas about rights to subsistence, the measured economy of the household, the value of their labour and the unequal appropriation of profits by intermediaries, all can intersect with and inform ethically-inspired acts of consumption.

Notes

1. This model of economic life, which appears natural and self-evident and which claims to be universally applicable, draws upon a philosophical and intellectual tradition that has its roots in Western Europe and can be traced back to the Enlightenment. John Locke, Thomas Hobbes and Jean Jacques Rousseau all asserted, in different ways, that we are born equal and free, and society and the economy should reflect this vision (Booth 1993: 117, 121). In seeking to undermine old hierarchical orders, Enlightenment philosophy questioned patriarchal definitions of the family, decried domination and asserted the value of independence rather than dependency. The aim was to set up the conditions whereby individuals might enter into voluntary and formal contracts (whether of work or marriage) and exercise choice in the content and duration of those agreements.

2. As has been pointed out, Smith has been much misread; his invisible hand of the market was based upon providential nature and natural inclinations to contribute to the common good. However, the general points, that intentional individual activity has an unintended collective outcome and that the economy is driven by these impersonal forces, are accepted (see Lubasz 1992).
3. In *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*, Max Weber (1958 [1931]) explicitly links this ethic to the birth of capitalism, since, he claims, worldly success is for the Protestant an indication of divine favour and hence salvation (see Coleman chap. 21 supra). For an anthropological study employing this insight, see Annis (1987).
4. This distinction is clearly visible in the divide between the formal and substantive meanings of economics (see Isaac chap. 1 supra). The former refers to the rational choices among different ends, made by individuals with limited means: this is the domain of economics. Anthropologists, on the other hand, more often rely on a substantive understanding of the economy, which situates people in relation to nature, objects and their fellow human beings.
5. I gratefully acknowledge support for this research from the Wenner Gren Foundation, New York City.
6. This can be seen, for example, in what is considered a 'model farm', that is, one on which a wide variety of foodstuffs are produced, and so most closely approximates the ideal of self-sufficiency.
7. A recent, much publicised example of ritualised destruction is provided by the rock group KLF, who purportedly took one million pounds sterling to the Arctic and burnt it.

References

Acuña Ortega, V. 1987. La ideología de los pequeños y medianos productores cafeteleros Costarricences, 1900–1961. *Revista de Historia* 16: 137–59.

Alexander, P. 1992. What's in a price? Trading practices in peasant (and other) markets. In *Contesting markets: analyses of ideology, discourse and practice* (ed.) R. Dilley. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Annis, S. 1987. *God and production in a Guatemalan town*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Barth, F. 1997. Economy, agency and ordinary lives. *Social Anthropology* 5: 233–42.

Battaglia, D. 1999. Toward an ethics of the open subject: writing culture in good conscience. In *Anthropological theory today* (ed.) H. Moore. Cambridge: Polity.

Bloch, M. 1989. The symbolism of money in Imerina. In *Money and the morality of exchange* (eds) J. Parry and M. Bloch. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bloch, M. and J. Parry 1989. Introduction: money and the morality of exchange. In *Money and the morality of exchange* (eds) J. Parry and M. Bloch. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Booth, W. 1993. *Households: on the moral architecture of the economy*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Carrier, J. 1997. Introduction. In *Meanings of the market: the free market in Western culture* (ed.) J. Carrier. Oxford: Berg.

Carrier, J. and D. Miller 1999. From private virtue to public vice. In *Anthropological theory today* (ed.) H. Moore. Cambridge: Polity.

Dilley, R. (ed.) 1992a. *Contesting markets: analyses of ideology, discourse and practice*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Dilley, R. 1992b. Contesting markets: a general introduction to market ideology, imagery and discourse. In *Contesting markets: analyses of ideology, discourse and practice* (ed.) R. Dilley. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Evers, H.-D. 1994. The traders' dilemma: a theory of the social transformation of markets and society. In *The moral economy of trade: ethnicity and developing markets* (eds) H.-D. Evers and H. Schrader. London: Routledge.

Frankena, W. 1973. *Ethics*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Friedland, R. and A. Robertson (eds) 1995. *Beyond the marketplace: rethinking economy and society*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Geschiere, P. 1992. Kinship, witchcraft and 'the market': hybrid patterns in Cameroonian society.

In *Contesting markets: analyses of ideology, discourse and practice* (ed.) R. Dilley. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
Gudeman, S. 1992. Markets, models and morality: the power of practices. In *Contesting markets: analyses of ideology, discourse and practice* (ed.) R. Dilley. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
Gudeman, S. and A. Rivera 1990. *Conversations in Colombia: the domestic economy in life and text*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Harris, O. 1989. The earth and the state: the sources and meanings of money in northern Potosí, Bolivia. In *Money and the morality of exchange* (eds) J. Parry and M. Bloch. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Harvey, D. 1993. Class relations, social justice and the politics of difference. In *Place and the politics of identity* (eds) M. Keith and K. Pile. London: Routledge.
Kahn, J. 1997. Demons, commodities and the history of anthropology. In *Meanings of the market: the free market in Western culture* (ed.) J. Carrier. Oxford: Berg.
Lubasz, H. 1992. Adam Smith and the invisible hand – of the market? In *Contesting markets: analyses of ideology, discourse and practice* (ed.) R. Dilley. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
Lutz, C. and D. Nonini 1999. The economies of violence and the violence of economies. In *Anthropological theory today* (ed.) H. Moore. Cambridge: Polity.
MacIntyre, A. 1988. *Whose justice? Which rationality?* London: Duckworth.
Marx, K. 2000 (1846). The German ideology. In *Karl Marx: selected writings* (ed.) D. McLellan. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Mauss, M. 1954 (1925). *The gift: forms and functions of exchange in archaic societies*. London: Cohen & West.
Miller, D. 1987. *Material culture and mass consumption*. Oxford: Blackwell.
Miller, D. 1995. Consumption as the vanguard of history: a polemic by way of an introduction. In *Acknowledging consumption: a review of new studies* (ed.) D. Miller. London: Routledge.
Nozick, R. 1974. *Anarchy, state and utopia*. New York: Basic Books.
Parry, J. 1989. On the moral perils of exchange. In *Money and the morality of exchange* (eds) J. Parry and M. Bloch. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Polanyi, K. 1957. The economy as instituted process. In *Trade and market in the early empires* (eds) K. Polanyi, C. Arensberg and H. Pearson. New York: Free Press.
Preston, P. 1992. Modes of economic-theoretical engagement. In *Contesting markets: analyses of ideology, discourse and practice* (ed.) R. Dilley. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
Preston, P. 1994. The political economy of trade. In *The moral economy of trade: ethnicity and developing markets* (eds) H.-D. Evers and H. Schrader. London: Routledge.
Rawls, J. 1971. *A theory of justice*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
Roseberry, W. 1997. Afterword. In *Meanings of the market: the free market in Western culture* (ed.) J. Carrier. Oxford: Berg.
Sahlins, M. 1994. Cosmologies of capitalism: the trans-Pacific sector of 'the world system'. In *Culture/power/history* (eds) N. Dirks, J. Eley and S. Ortner. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Sallnow, M. 1989. Precious metals in the Andean moral economy. In *Money and the morality of exchange* (eds) J. Parry and M. Bloch. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Scott, J. 1976. *The moral economy of the peasant: rebellion and subsistence in Southeast Asia*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.
Taussig, M. 1980. *The devil and commodity fetishism in South America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
Thompson, E.P. 1980 (1963). *The making of the English working class*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
Weber, M. 1958 (1931). *The protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
Wells, R. 1994. E.P. Thompson, *Customs in common* and moral economy. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 21: 263–307.
Wilson, R. 1997. Human rights, culture and context: an introduction. In *Human rights, culture and context: anthropological perspectives* (ed.) R. Wilson. London: Pluto.
Yang, M. 2000. Putting global capitalism in its place. *Current Anthropology* 41: 477–509.

25 Households and their markets in the Andes

Enrique Mayer

There are no good models to represent the relationship between household economies and markets. The difficulty starts with the very concept of the household as starkly opposed to the market, which implies that because the household produces by itself what it needs, it does not need the market. Anthropologists who have investigated the household as a unit of production and consumption tend to treat the market as peripheral to the basic organisation of the household. Reading Stephen Gudeman and Alberto Rivera's (1990) description of the household standing alone and unaided, its members working hard merely to satisfy their needs, gives the erroneous impression that the model household's goal is autarchy. Economists, on the other hand, distort the concept of a household economy when their models translate the schema of a market economy onto households, which forces the house into the mould of a small firm interacting with the market. In so far as a household differs from a firm, the relationship between household and market is made problematic.

Yet pure, market-less households do not exist. We therefore commonly say that the household's integration to the market is partial. This reveals our perplexity more than it aids our understanding. I am going to argue that there are three spheres of exchange which articulate the household to a larger world. First are the social links the household develops with other households, along which goods flow. Second there is the national market operating with money, which penetrates deeply into the inner workings of the household. Third is a sphere of exchange which I shall call the 'space in between', because it operates on the fringes of both the market and the realm of social relationships.

The concept of sphere of exchange was defined by Paul Bohannan (1963: 246; see Isaac chap. 1 supra) as: 'One in which a society's exchangeable goods fall into two or more mutually exclusive spheres, each marked by different institutionalization and different moral values'. For example, the household's production can be categorised as being for subsistence and for the market. The spheres of exchange are marked by the mode of exchange that predominates within a sphere. In our example, sale is distinct from allocation of food among household members. Spheres also delineate social relationships and groups with whom it is appropriate to exchange. Thus, in the impersonal market one may buy and sell, while with one's neighbours and relatives one should be mindful of the rules of reciprocity that shape the exchanges between them.

The market sphere has been subjected to rigorous definitions and theoretical elaboration, and is the subject of much ideological dispute. Whether the market is present or absent in a given place, to what degree it has penetrated, globalised, expanded or shrunk is considered important. Markets are said to differ according to whether supply, demand and price can operate freely within them (Bohannan and Dalton 1968: 1). We learn that markets can be perfect, imperfect, volatile or stable. The shape, magnitude and growth of markets loom large in any debate about development. The kind of market operating in a given locality says something about the presence or absence of capitalism and globalisation, and the impact they have in rearranging social relationships on a small and on a grand scale. There are many kinds of markets: stock markets, future markets, international commodity markets. There are also rural peasant markets. Many anthropologists studied these markets from the 1950s to the 1970s (Belshaw 1965; Bohannan and Dalton 1968; Geertz 1963; Malinowski and de la Fuente 1982; Mintz 1959; Plattner 1989: chaps 7, 8; Skinner 1964; Tax 1963), and they were mindful of the specific functions these markets perform for rural people and how they differ from other markets. Gudeman and Rivera (1990: 143) sum them up succinctly:

> The rural folk start from the needs and capacities of the house, using the market not to make a living but to purchase what they cannot produce and to store what they cannot hold … The rural folk do not sell goods to obtain money as an end, nor is cash held as a store of wealth although the people keep small amounts within the home … the circulatory processes of the market serving to redistribute products between houses.

Distancing myself from the functionalism that characterised those early studies, I am going to argue that an interesting approach is to treat the monetised markets in which rural households operate as analogous to the way nations treat their international market. That is, I think it useful to see the household's market sales and purchases as similar to exports and imports. This approach opens up worthwhile questions because economists' models of international trade forcefully draw attention to three things. First, they differentiate an export–import sector of the economy from the country's national economy, an issue that is also important in household economies. Second, international trade monitors a double flow, the flow of goods and services across international boundaries, as well as the more complex issue of how foreign exchange circulates through markets. Household economies can similarly be divided into their domestic (most often called 'subsistence') sector and their market sector. Third, this approach facilitates a sectoral approach, by regarding markets as differentiated plural realities, rather than treating the logic of the market as a single all-embracing conceptual and ideological entity (Carrier 1997).

Using this approach, we can see the household interacting with a domestic sector and the national market. The domestic sector is not only composed of the self-consumed products of a household (that is, the things it both produces and consumes) but also the sphere in which households (the plural is deliberate) carry out localised exchanges with other households and interact within a larger network of agents in quasi-market structures that characterise the space in between. Of the two, only the national market sometimes fits the conditions of a proper market that theoretical economics envisages. The other spheres may or may not fit those conditions, and they may be classed as markets or not. The dichotomy of market vs. non-market is unhelpful, and we should look at exchange spheres as a continuum and study how they interact with one another.

In order to participate in the market, the household must gain access to national currency, which is the household's foreign exchange currency. Money is issued by central banks and it 'trickles down' into the countryside with great difficulty. Thus, money is like foreign currency, being external to the local economy and hard to get: resources must be expended in order to acquire cash and the price of money is high. As Gudeman and Rivera (1990: 155) say, the household's cost of entry into the market is high and market participation is carried out under conditions of absolute comparative disadvantage with adverse terms of trade for the house economy.

In behavioural terms as well, money in a peasant economy is analogous to a foreign currency in a national economy. Both the peasant's money and a nation's foreign currency are kept in their own separate domains, surrounded by complex cultural and symbolic constructs. In both cases, special strategies are employed to keep reserves replenished; priority is given to foreign over local currency; and depletion of reserves often precipitates a crisis. I shall argue that market participation and the flow of money may often have a perverse effect on the household economy.

This chapter gives examples from the Andean region, uses aspects of my own research in rural Peru (Mayer 2002) and develops points raised by Gudeman's work in Colombia, Panama and Guatemala (Gudeman 2001; Gudeman and Rivera 1990). It also draws on research by two Peruvian economists, Efraín Gonzales de Olarte (1994) and Adolfo Figueroa (1984) whose scholarship on *economías campesinas* (peasant economies) in the southern Peruvian Andes is worthy of wider attention. While the regional focus is relatively narrow, the general points made here apply fairly broadly.

The money and *gasto* spheres inside the house

In this section I shall break apart the common notion that a household's production can be divided into subsistence and surplus. Instead, it is better to approach what goes on inside the household as the permanent struggle

between resources earmarked for self-consumption and those designated to bring in money.

Andean households' monitoring of flows of goods, services and money involves three categories or stocks, which I shall call spheres, that peasants attempt to keep separate (Fonseca Martel 1972). The first of the three spheres is of *gasto* ('expenditures to cover needs'; Gudeman and Rivera 1990: 44). The second sphere is of money, and the third is of services rendered through reciprocal labour obligations and barter opportunities. The three spheres are a means of tracing changes in stocks and flows of goods and services; each has its own accounting unit.

Accounting *gasto* is done in real quantities: so many sacks of potatoes, pairs of corn ears and *arrobas* of fava beans. They are rarely added up and even more rare is the practice of giving *gasto* holdings a monetary expression, but women who control this sphere have a clear idea of the quantities and assortment of items they need to maintain their family. The *gasto* ledger also includes the all-important kilos of sugar, bags of noodles, packets of salt and quarter-litre bottles of commercially produced alcoholic drinks bought in the market, which, as we shall see, consumes two-thirds of the household's monetary income.

The account of the money category is kept in currency terms. It includes not only actual bills and coins, but also resources earmarked for the production of money. The field to be planted in cash crops, the potatoes to be fed to workers when that field is worked, the coca leaf, alcohol and tobacco bought in the market which are accounted as labour costs, and the reciprocal labour obligations assigned to ploughing the cash field are part of the money category, 'for money' (*para plata*, the same term that Colombian farmers use; Gudeman and Rivera 1990: 46). Some household resources allocated to this sphere are converted to cash via the market, so the withdrawal of goods needed to produce money is anxiously noted and added up. However, men's and women's labour costs incurred in these activities are counted within the *gasto* sphere.

Money, considered a dangerous element because of its inherent liquid properties and its tendency to flow out of the household, has to be carefully managed and insulated from other flows. In this connection, Olivia Harris (1987: 251) notes:

> It seems that women who are responsible for the household budget oppose the conversion to money if they don't have in mind an immediate purchase to complete the circuit. This practice serves as a protection against inflation but is also a strategy to prevent men from converting money's excessive liquidity to drink, that is, drunkenness.

Service accounts are remembered by farmers as the number of obligations

in favour of or against the household in terms of *ayni*, the Quechua term for reciprocal labour debts (Mayer 1974; Mayer and Zamalloa 1974). As well, this sphere includes other kinship, social and ritual obligations that entail customary expenditures beyond the nuclear family household.

The spheres for *gasto*, money and services are not tallied in any single measure of value. As Fonseca Martel (1986: 380) puts it: 'In each sphere the relationships of production and the cultural values are different'. This separation of spheres does not imply, however, that money or its products do not enter into, for example, the *gasto* sphere. The goods in the *gasto* sphere include, in addition to retained crops, all mercantile goods that are consumed as well as the 'ceremonial fund' (Wolf 1966), expenditures necessary to fulfil religious *cargo* obligations. Likewise, the money sphere includes the reciprocal labour exchanges that are applied to commodity production: 'The peasants finance their economy on the basis of traditional exchanges and on the basis of the advantages that they can achieve, here and there, in the mercantile sphere' (Fonseca Martel 1986: 380).

Transfers

Although the spheres are different accounting categories, the previous section indicated that transfers between the *gasto* and money spheres occur all the time. Consumption goods bought in the market lose their monetary value when they enter the *gasto* sphere and become kilos of sugar. The money assigned to purchase these goods is called *para el gasto* (for expenditure), and it passes from men to women to signal that transfer (though observers throughout the Andes show how difficult it often is for women to persuade men to hand over the money; for example, Bourque and Warren 1981: 125, 144; Deere 1990: 288). Likewise, in the productive process resources are clearly transferred from one sphere to another, as when potatoes are taken out of storage to feed wage earners working on a cash crop. These transfers are not clearly accounted for as costs of production, which is why resources from the *gasto* sphere are not specifically evaluated in the money sphere. This is not to say, however, that *gasto* resources have not been counted. Women know how many resources under their jurisdiction have been used for different agricultural activities, and they carefully plan how to replace them. The transfer from one sphere to the other implies a passing of control from women to men. In our study of commercial potato production (Mayer and Glave 1999), we showed that transfers whereby the household absorbs a portion of the costs of production permit the household to sell cash crops below their real costs, disguising the losses to themselves.

The agricultural calendar has seasonal rhythms with a mundane praxis as well as economic, ritual and ideological structures. Each activity has its season, its associated ceremonies and its intimate familial ways. As the time

for certain activities approaches, family members begin planning how to marshal the resources needed. For example, the sale of animals goes up when the schools are about to start in order to buy uniforms, notebooks and pencils. Money is husbanded (note the familial term) so that cash is available when expenditures are due. The proceeds from the sale of one harvest are often used to finance the next planting. When the household is to sponsor a village-wide fiesta, men leave the village to find paid work in order to get the money, allocated to the *gasto* sphere, that the event requires.

Consumption needs are always in competition with productive uses. Money is invested in the productive process in amounts that vary throughout the agricultural cycle. Outlays at the beginning of the season worry farmers the most. Expenditures for fertiliser and wages tend to occur during the period of greatest cash shortage, and in moments of crisis the household has to liquidate some of its stocks to replenish its cash reserve. In our study of the unprofitability of commercial potato production, Manuel Glave and I found that farmers generally considered their cash crop 'profitable' if they were able to recover a little more than the cash invested in it, ignoring the transfers from the *gasto* sphere that made this possible (Mayer et al. 1992: 68–95). When farmers used credit programmes from the Agrarian Bank, about half of the money advanced was used for consumption, the other half was invested in inputs. If the sale of their crop brought in just enough to pay back their loan, they said that they were 'even' and in good standing to start again.

These findings should alert social scientists to the need for modifying deeply-held perspectives about household economies. Academics usually imagine that peasants cover their subsistence needs first and only then sell their surplus (Lipton 1968). Eric Wolf's (1966) terminology, for example, points to the priority that caloric minima have in the peasant economy: his discussion of the surplus comes afterwards. Gudeman and Rivera's (1990: 47) house model also privileges maintenance and physical growth of *la base*, the household's productive resources, above those of cash accumulation. In their model, money should be kept away from the house as much as possible. The image that comes to mind is of horizontal layers of material wealth, with a broad base of subsistence goods at the bottom, fewer surplus market goods on top, and the market layer implicitly but securely placed over the subsistence layer.

Gudeman and Rivera write that peasants insist on having a gate that keeps farm products 'inside', carefully controlling what goes out of their doors and what comes in, which makes them sound rather like protectionist politicians. Perhaps peasants invoke this model so often because it no longer works. Instead, I suggest a sector model inside the house, with the sectors side by side. One is a market-oriented money sector (*para plata*) and the other is a home-based, food and consumption sector (*para el gasto*). The two sectors are

interdependent and subsidise each other, but they also deplete each other, and even though the home sector sustains the market sector, in people's estimation it is unimportant.

The interdependence is neither as symbiotic nor as smooth as is suggested by the horizontal subsistence and surplus model. For example, *gasto* production not intended for sale has hefty monetary inputs (Mayer and Glave 1999: 356) that cannot be recovered from that activity alone. Negative feedback relationships between the money and *gasto* sectors have profound influences on each other that tend to worsen the situation of the peasantry. Those relationships may have deleterious effects on subsistence production, consumption, nutrition, resource maintenance, ecological stability, and even sustainability, as the household struggles to keep exporting cash crops to a market where prices for what they sell keep falling and prices for what they buy keep rising. Gudeman and Rivera (1990: 48) have similar concerns: 'The house cannot persist as a pure market participant but is increasingly forced to do so, with the result that it must lower its consumption or raise its work input'.

Markets in the Andes

Historically, the rural economy of the Andes has been restricted, mercantilist, state-controlled, non-expansive and ethnically differentiated. Harris (1995: 375) shows that Indian participation is restricted to petty buying and selling, in contrast to the *mestizos* and *blancos*, who assume the wholesale, merchant, banking and administrative functions. The rural markets are weakly integrated into the national economy, and central and intermediate cities play the dominant role in structuring the flow of produce out of the countryside (Gonzales de Olarte 1994). A study of the Cuzco region illustrates this (Baca and Guillón 1993). Seventy-eight per cent of this region's GDP is generated within the city of Cuzco; only 5.5 per cent of goods consumed by the urban population comes from its hinterland. Moreover, for every sol expended by consumers in the city, the peasant sector receives only 0.17 sol (Gonzales de Olarte 1994: 296). The regional market is 'restricted' because supply and demand set prices within a limited space only (1994: 260); it is 'segmented' because price variations in one region do not greatly affect others. A regional system structures markets in hierarchical fashion forming a dendridic network (Appleby 1976; Smith 1976) that draws foodstuffs and export crops into the city and sends few goods back out to the countryside. Further, the money that dribbles into the countryside flows back out quickly, generating no rural savings.

This hierarchical market system is also important in the downward distribution of urban products, processed food, clothing and tools. The processed food industry in Peru is large, often foreign owned and dependent

on imported raw materials (Lajo 1990), and its products are important for peasant households. This operates to peasants' disadvantage. While the prices of the agricultural goods that they sell fluctuate wildly, the long-term trend is downward, while the prices of the things they buy rise gradually (Gonzales de Olarte 1987). Over the long run, then, the terms of trade for peasants steadily deteriorate. Other market factors also work against peasants. Households are price takers for the sale of their perishable produce, and peasant sellers face stiff competition not only from other peasant sellers, but also from the national and international agroindustrial sector and from food brought in as part of aid programmes (Doughty 1991).

A weak and unsteady demand for labour in a region where there has been institutionalised forced labour for centuries leads to low wages paid by the day, without job security or social benefits. Further, the labour that is sought is unskilled, deployed in ever-widening circuits to mining and export enclaves, provincial cities, the capital of Lima and, increasingly, abroad (Altamirano 1992; Figueroa 1982; Hurtado 1999).

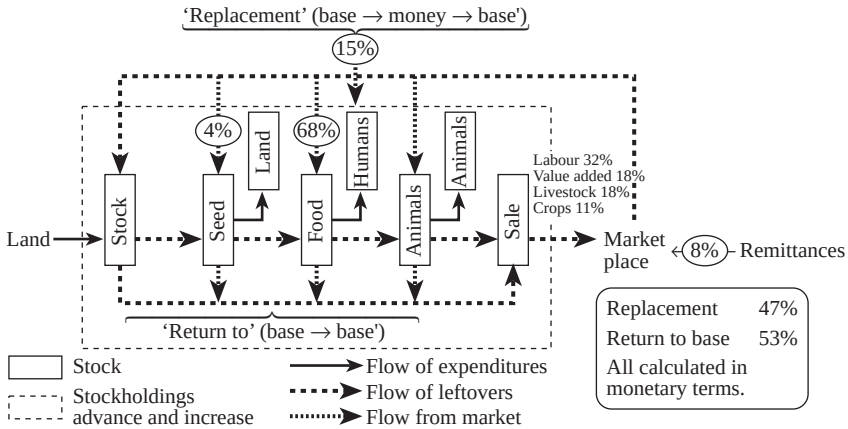
The territorial restructuring by constructing roads from valley bottoms up into the rugged and isolated mountain regions erodes older comparative advantages based on colonial and pre-Hispanic trading routes that have been drastically redrawn. Paradoxically, the new roads increase the isolation and peripheralisation of many highland dwellers (Hurtado 1999; Mazurek 1999). In all, the poor regional network of roads, the great distances, the difficult mountain topography and the absence of communication systems all mean that these households are at the 'frontiers of the market', as Gonzales de Olarte (1994) aptly titles his book.

Imports and exports

What and how much do peasants import into their households from this market? Based on surveys of 306 peasant households in eight villages of southern Peru in 1978, Figueroa (1984) identified the income and expenditure streams of a diverse range of activities typical of those households.

Figure 25.1 presents a modified version of the diagram of Gudeman and Rivera's (1990) house schema. I have quantified the flows identified in this diagram with Figueroa's data, representative of the average household in the poorest rural regions of southern Peru.

Imports from the market flow along the top of the diagram, with a surprisingly high 68 per cent consisting of food items (mainly processed industrial food), and a very low 4 per cent being inputs to the land. The numbers next to 'sale' and below 'marketplace' in the figure depict the composition of the house's exports. Note that labour and value-added products (that is, those processed before they are sold) constitute 50 per cent of exports for money in contrast to the low percentage of staples that are sold. Note too



Note: 'The average family income levels estimated vary by community from 47,000 to 80,000 (1978) *soles* per year. On a *per capita* basis this income varies between 12,000 and 20,000 *soles* per year (18.5% of the urban minimum wage) … To put the discussion in a global context, we can see that the annual family income is approximately US$ 250–400, while the annual *per capita* income is $ 60–90. We thus have an estimation of the extreme absolute and relative poverty in which these families live' (Figueroa 1984: 42).

Source: Based on Gudeman and Rivera (1990: 119), data from Figueroa (1984).

Figure 25.1 The modified house schema

that the export–import account is in deficit, balanced by remittances from household emigrants that keep the house going. The export–import sector accounts for 47 per cent of the flow through the house economy.

The domestic front

Self-consumption is mostly of agricultural products, some animal products (for example, wool) and items made from local resources. In order to identify the proportion of consumption items that spring from the household itself, Figueroa and Gonzales de Olarte have done studies that convert non-monetary transactions into monetary equivalents. This method of calculating everything in 'foreign' monetary terms may have its problems, but it permits certain comparisons. Figueroa finds that, on average, 53 per cent of total income is generated by the household itself for self-consumption (in the six villages this ranged between 45 and 70 per cent; Figueroa 1984: 43). In Gonzales de Olarte's (1994: 124) study in the Cuzco region, the self-consumed proportion comes to 37 per cent of total income.

Another way to estimate the size and importance of the domestic sector for households is to measure calories or energy flows. In a study of the high *puna*

Ñuñoa, Department of Puno, R. Brooke Thomas (1976) found that the average household exported 538,000 Kcal in animal products (half of its total calorie production), for which it received 2,664,000 Kcal in high-energy foods, a fivefold increase, which represented three-quarters of the household's calorie intake. In this protein–calorie exchange, the market clearly plays an important role in supplying the household with food. However, not all of this exchange is effected via the money market, since a sizeable proportion of meat and wool is also bartered with lowland maize farmers.

In another calorie study, Volkmar Blum (1995: 159–69) analysed production and consumption in Lamay-Qosqo, Cuzco, a maize-growing valley community. There, a mid-size family produces 9.4 million Kcal of agricultural and animal products annually. Nearly half (47 per cent) was consumed by the family, and this more than adequately covered the family's food needs. Sixteen per cent was used for seed reserve, animal feed and payments in kind. One third of agricultural production was sold, and this export brought in cash equivalent of US$300. Only 3 per cent was used in barter and gifts to other households.

These different studies indicate that roughly half of total household production enters the market, whether we value this in monetary terms or in calories. Likewise, a great proportion of imports are basic food items, so to talk about self-sufficiency is ludicrous. Seen this way, one can only concur with Figueroa (1984: 42–3):

> With this empirical result it is no longer possible to refer to the peasant economy as 'self-sufficient' or as 'dual'. On the contrary, it is an economy well [that is, thoroughly] integrated into the rest of the Peruvian economy. Normally when one speaks of countries one refers to an 'open economy' as one in which exports comprise 20–25 percent of GNP. On the other hand, the peasant economy has always been seen as 'closed', 'self sufficient', outside the market, when in fact it exports half of its net product.

Yet this talk of 'integration' misses three important points. First, rural household production for the urban market has always faced low prices for its exports (Schejtman 1988: 379). Second, the household has lost its comparative advantage to a globalised food market. This market affects rural households of the Andes in negative ways. It feeds them but also denies them a market for their products. 'The peasantry is ousted from the production of agricultural crops when it cannot compete with large-scale capitalist production of those crops or with the undervalued imports of foodstuffs via overvalued exchange rates and price subsidies' (de Janvry 1981: 173). And third, the principal export of the rural household constitutes its own labour rather than its products, thereby debilitating its own base.

When the Peruvian national economy crashed in 1991 in the structural

readjustment period of the Fujimori regime, the strategies peasants employed to defend themselves against the crisis involved a drastic retreat from the market, a de-intensification of agriculture and a reduction in marketable output. Market integration is a dangerous game indeed.

The space in between

The space in between is composed of three elements: utilitarian reciprocal exchanges, barter and the informal sector. The task here is to integrate these non-monetary patterns into a framework that also deals with the relationship of the household with the import–export monetary market. I am tempted to call this space the internal market, to distinguish it from the external market, but this would violate common scholarly usage. Suffice it to say that this in-between exchange network performs many of the functions of a market, and it is found in marketplaces, fairs and street corners, as well as in the informal sector in urban areas. The space in between is one of the few places where net gains can be made, and where an outlay of money can generate more money.

The pervasive non-monetary inter-household exchanges of labour, goods and sociability have made Andean Indians famous (Harris 2000). The magnitude, significance and operation of this sphere needs to be highlighted. Reciprocal labour exchanges between households constitute a large segment of non-monetary transactions. In our study of extra-household labour in potato fields in the Paucartambo Valley of the Cuzco region, 24 per cent of total labour was recruited through non-monetary labour exchanges, while 19 per cent was paid a money wage (Mayer et al. 1992: 164). Gonzales de Olarte's study of the Cuzco communities reports (1994: 191) that 34 per cent of labour exchanges are non-monetary, while 65 per cent of labour was paid in cash. Reciprocal exchanges among kin-related households is so pervasive that the Quechua term *ayni* (reciprocal exchange) has become the trope used by indigenous movements to epitomise their cultural differences with the white Western world, a trope that implicitly marks the virtue and moral superiority of the communal mutual aid of the Andean way of life in contrast to the selfish greed of the market and its devil's money (Taussig 1980).

In my study of barter (Mayer 2002: chap. 5), I showed that barter is a form of protectionism. Barter networks constitute an economic sphere that is separate from the cash sphere, constructed and maintained by the peasantry who, for their own purposes and to their own advantages, try to keep it separate from the cash nexus. Peasants isolate a flow of goods to favour a group of fellow peasants, who use cultural norms to create a distinct circuit of goods for their own benefit. Norms governing with whom one barters and how control the behaviour of those inside the group and reserve privileged trading opportunities to partners. Such networks attempt, albeit not very

successfully, to exclude competitive intrusions of agents from the money market.

Harris (1982: 114) echoes this characterisation in her study of the Bolivian Aymara-speaking Laymi 'ethnic economy' in the 1980s: 'What makes this Indigenous economy of particular interest is the persistence of product-circulation outside the market on a large scale'. Laymi people's endogamous marriage patterns, together with their communal land tenure uniting numerous villages covering a long strip of territory that links highland pastoral areas with lowland maize areas, results in 'Laymi today exchanging less in terms of produce and labour outside the ethnic group than they have done in previous centuries' (1982: 81).

Barter also thrives because of shortages of money (see Hart chap. 10 supra). Such shortages cause people to rely on barter in much the same way that collapses of national currencies create renewed conditions where barter surfaces, even in monetised economies, such as the recent collapse in Argentina. I thus also argue that the inefficient operation of the cash nexus creates and maintains the barter sphere.

One surprising observation from the Peruvian case is that the frequency of barter and the volume of goods bartered appear to be so small. According to Figueroa (1984: 39), barter is a marginal activity covering perhaps 5–10 per cent of household production. Fonseca Martel (1972: 120) estimates that 10 per cent of the harvest is used for barter. The households in Blum's study (1995: 164) reserved only 3 per cent of the maize harvest for barter and gifts. An exception reported in the literature is the fruit-growing village of Tapay in the Colca Valley in Arequipa, where barter with highland pastoralists predominates over monetary transactions (Paerregaard 1997: 99).

Under-reporting is undoubtedly one factor for the low apparent level of barter. Numbers are not easily remembered and form part of an ethic of 'things not to be accounted' (*no se lleva cuenta*). The sporadic and opportunistic nature of barter transactions may also contribute to their being not considered as part of regular income patterns. Further, barter is less visible because it deliberately bypasses the money markets which researchers monitor more closely. Finally, and with good reason, household members may not find it in their best interest to report their barter transactions to researchers.

Whatever their relative size, these exchange systems perform all the functions of a market system without them being markets *strictu sensu*. They bring in goods the household does not produce; they are responsive to shifts in supply and demand. In barter systems and reciprocal labour exchanges, buyer and seller are owners of the products and services they trade. The rates of exchange are established through a reference to established equivalencies and there is ample room to haggle in Quechua, the language in which they were all fluent. They are also competitive.

Peasants suffer from a shortage of cash, and yet have to live in what Weatherford (1997: chap. 14) in other contexts calls the 'cash ghetto'. The middle classes and the developed world have access to money in the form of bank deposits, checks, credit cards and ATM machines, while poor people and rural households are denied access to them. 'The high reliance on cash is an almost universal characteristic of poor people' (Weatherford 1997: 211). Hence 'thriftiness in the use of money' (Gudeman and Rivera 1990: 79) reserves cash for market transactions. Barter serves to fill the spaces caused by a shortage of cash. 'Rural barter is an "off-the-market" exchange, a way of getting access to market functions without having to control a money fund' (Gudeman and Rivera 1990: 143).

Other advantages, too, explain the preference for barter. In some cases, as demonstrated by Glynn Custred (1974: 279), barter trade is profitable, particularly if it absorbs long-distance transportation services and involves more than one transaction. Barter exchange rates tend to be controlled by peasants themselves and remain more stable and predictable in the short and medium terms. The barter sphere is relatively insulated from turmoil in the national economy, such as inflation, devaluation, currency collapse and central bank bankruptcy. And yet barter is part of the traditional household's construction of its livelihood, which in its operation reflects and creates social relations among the inhabitants of different villages in the region. Barter networks integrate an economic region that is different from the narrow corridors of the money market, and provide an organisation of space, and movement of goods and peoples, that is different from the city-dominted money-based markets. It is important to remember, though, that this peasant sphere exists within a more powerful and complex system of extractive and exploitative market relations that also affect the peasant household economy in the Andes.

Arbitrage

The space between households and the extractive national market allows room for trade: moving goods and services between markets for profit. The term 'arbitrage' (used by stock traders for the simultaneous purchase and sale of securities in different markets in order to profit from price discrepancies) is apposite because traders move between monetary markets, the space in between and the realm of household relations. They hawk in the marketplaces, peddle from house to house and undertake long barter trips, and they link households by providing goods they cannot produce and by trading in what rarely can be profitably sold for money. By exploiting various forms of exchange and social relationships they make individual gains from their entrepreneurial skills. There are numerous opportunities to exchange, using barter, cash, reciprocity, payment in kind, credit and new kinds of transaction yet to be studied.

Fonseca Martel (1972: 152) provides a nice example of arbitrage:

> A poor woman, monolingual in Quechua, went to market, bought a can of sardines, walked to another village, exchanged it for an *arroba* of potatoes. Returned to the market, bartered them for two *arrobas* of oranges, and then sat in the Tangor plaza for three days selling the oranges one by one. She tripled her initial cash outlay.

She chose to sell oranges in Tangor because of the presence of a team of archaeologists and anthropologists, Fonseca Martel included, visiting the village with pockets full of cash.

Following Frederick Barth (1967), we can call the routes that arbitrageurs traverse 'circuits'. These are complex chains of transactions that, with luck, may produce some kind of gain for the trader. Some circuits are more profitable than others, but there are social, physical, legal and cash barriers that contain these circuits and limit their expansion or growth. The barriers allow for the co-existence of discrepancies in returns between the circuits. Barth also discusses entrepreneurs as those who seize on discrepancies to realise material gains but, in so doing, rearrange the circuits themselves and cause other people to reassess their original situation. Barth's scheme is helpful because it suggests that we should study the circuits and opportunities for entrepreneurship, rather than be obsessed with the mode of transaction and its relationship to one or another social group.

Figueroa's study provides an estimate of trading income that ranges from 8 to 50 per cent of total monetary exports in his six villages. In two villages trading generated 30 per cent of income of monetary exports, in others it was much lower. Villages provided opportunities for a range of different trading circuits. Some were derived from cattle operations, others from trading coca leaves brought from the lowlands and distributed higher up, from operating bakeries and brewing maize beer, and in the case of the highest percentage of income of his sample, it was because the community had a marketplace at the end of the road, where household members traded on market days (Figueroa 1984: 37). Because of his insistence on separating cash from barter transactions, Figueroa admits that he may have underestimated the amount of trade between communities.

Gudeman and Rivera's (1990: 139–42) description of the rural marketplace mentions this kind of trading only in passing, describing the kinds of traders one can find there and how a variety of small transactions take place on a 'pin money' level (Bohannan and Dalton 1968: 7). This kind of marketplace is another locus of the space in between. The coffee buyer and the labour recruiter do not appear in Gudeman's description, because, as Bohannan and Dalton have aptly pointed out, the capitalist market often bypasses peasant marketplaces altogether.

The fringes of these marketplaces are also the sites where there are what

Gonzales de Olarte calls 'proto-markets'. He places the proto-market in an evolutionary scheme as a small, primitive market not yet fully developed: 'those forms of exchange that do not yet have the characteristics of the impersonality in the transactions, that have barriers to entry and exit, and that do not function in a regular manner' (Gonzales de Olarte 1997: 40). The real market passes them by since it is not the appropriate institution for regulating their minuscule trickle of goods. Consequently, barter and cash can co-exist in a sort of unequal symbiosis. In short, barter is seen by Gonzales de Olarte as residue, as what the real market cannot or will not pick up.

I disagree. I find that this space in between is large, dynamic and growing. It moves us away from measuring export and import balances of the household and into the world of gains and losses by individual traders. It often is easier to 'get' money through the space in between than through the export of household products. This kind of trading has followed householders in their migration to cities, to shanty towns and even abroad. 'New migrants look for work and guidance to their predecessors, especially relatives from the same communities, and carry on much the same activities as they did at home' (Sheahan 1999: 100). This sort of trade is a large segment of the Peruvian urban economy, where more than 80 per cent of workers were in personal services and retail trade in 1997 (Sheahan 1999: 99). In Ecuador's Otavalo, indigenous traders have successfully created a vibrant tourist and handicraft market and keep a tight control over it (Colloredo-Mansfeld 1999; Meisch 2002).

The mixture of forms of transaction, the provision of personal services, the sharp cash-ghetto practices with which it trades, its invisibility to the official eye and its open defiance characterise the informal sector in the underdeveloped world, and it is invading the developed world as well (Hart 1973, 2000: 149–54; Smith 1989). The informal space in between is a dynamic market segment that scares the agents of the state and its officialdom, its copyright enforcers, market regulators and tax collectors. Mary Weismantel (2001) finds the transgressive behaviour ascribed to the quintessential Andean market-woman entrepreneur, the *chola*, its most important attribute. Above all, the informal market co-exists uneasily with the formal market. Full of disdain, a conservative Peruvian author, Mario Vargas Llosa (1987), calls highland Indian migrant informals 'black marketers' in the foreword of Hernando de Soto's (1989) *The other path*, a book that enthrals neoliberals, who see in formalising the informal the solution to the problems of underdevelopment.

Four paradoxical conclusions

First, the monetary market in peripheral rural areas where the household economy predominates is centralised, small, undeveloped and accounts for a small part of regional GDP.

Second, by and large, the official national market does not serve rural people well, and yet paradoxically about half of households' resources are linked to this market. Food producers in the Andes are heavy consumers of imported foods. Commercial profits are difficult to realise in this market, but what drives it is the need for cash. The low price that households fetch when they sell agricultural products is the most important factor in explaining their reluctant participation as cash-crop producers. This does not mean that they are unresponsive to price signals, as indicated by their reaction to the higher returns realised by selling cattle or their own labour.

Third, because of these adverse conditions households try to avoid the monetised market in order to preserve their internal integrity as best they can. 'One of the puzzling features of the countryside is precisely that the house economy exists within a market context yet survives by avoiding purchases' (Gudeman and Rivera 1990: 140). Yet rural marketplaces are lively places, full of hucksters who make gains by participating in it. Successful entrepreneurial trading activities can bring much-needed money to the household. The role of trade has not yet been adequately integrated into studies of household economies, even though we have excellent urban ethnographies of market traders to guide us (Buechler 1997; Clark 1994; Kahn 1980).

Fourth, the inefficient circulation of national currency as a medium of exchange, the high cost of obtaining it, the bureaucratic control and the cash ghetto that characterises the circulation of currency in urban and rural areas of underdeveloped countries, all create opportunities for the emergence of the third space; that is, exchange circuits that bypass the legal framework, the cash nexus and the formal markets, even as this third space ultimately depends on the formal market's existence because it is its extension into the periphery.

References

Altamirano, T. 1992. *Exodo: Peruanos en el exterior*. Lima: Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú.

Appleby, G. 1976. The role of urban food needs in regional development, Puno, Peru. In *Regional analysis: economic systems*, vol. 1 (ed.) C.A. Smith. New York: Academic Press.

Baca, E. and J. Guillón 1993. *Análisis de la economía de la región Inka en base a tablas de insumo-producto*. Cusco: Centro de Estudios Rurales Andinos 'Bartolomé de las Casas'.

Barth, F. 1967. Economic spheres in Darfur. In *Themes in economic anthropology* (ed.) R. Firth. London: Tavistock.

Belshaw, C.S. 1965. *Traditional exchange and modern markets*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Blum, V. 1995. *Campesinos y teóricos agrarios: pequeña agricultura en los Andes del sur del Perú*. Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos.

Bohannan, P. 1963. *Social anthropology*. New York: Holt, Reinhart & Winston.

Bohannan, P. and G. Dalton 1968. Introduction. In *Markets in Africa* (eds) P. Bohannan and G. Dalton. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press.

Bourque, S.C. and K. Warren 1981. *Women of the Andes: patriarchy and social change in two Peruvian towns*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Buechler, J.M. 1997. The visible and vocal politics of female traders and small scale producers in La Paz. In *Women and economic change: Andean perspectives* (eds) A. Miles and H. Buechler. Washington, DC: American Anthropology Association.
Carrier, J.G. 1997. Introduction. In *Meanings of the market* (ed.) J.G. Carrier. Oxford: Berg.
Clark, G. 1994. *Onions are my husband: survival and accumulation by West African market women*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Colloredo-Mansfeld, R. 1999. *Native leisure class: consumption and cultural creativity in the Andes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Custred, G. 1974. Llameros y el trueque interzonal. In *Reciprocidad e intercambio en los Andes peruanos* (eds) G. Alberti and E. Mayer. Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos.
de Janvry, A. 1981. *The agrarian question and reformism in Latin America*. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press.
de Soto, H. 1989. *The other path: the invisible revolution in the Third World*. New York: Harper & Row.
Deere, C.D. 1990. *Household and class relations: peasants and landlords in northern Peru*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Doughty, P.L. 1991. The food game in Latin America. In *Anthropology and food policy: human dimensions of food policy in Africa and Latin America* (ed.) D.E. McMillan. Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press.
Figueroa, A. 1982. *Rural labor markets in Peru*. Geneva: International Labor Organization.
Figueroa, A. 1984. *Capitalist development and the peasant economy in Peru*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Fonseca Martel, C. 1972. *Sistemas económicos en las comunidades campesinas del Perú*. Lima: Departamento de Antropología, Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos.
Fonseca Martel, C. 1986. Comentario a 'Dos vías de desarrollo capitalista en la agricultura, o crítica de la razón Chayanov-Marxisante'. *Revista Andina* 3: 379–80.
Geertz, C. 1963. *Peddlers and princes: social change and economic modernization in two Indonesian towns*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Gonzales de Olarte, E. 1987. *Inflación y campesinado: comunidades y microrregiones frente a la crisis*. Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos.
Gonzales de Olarte, E. 1994. *En las fronteras del mercado: economía política del campesinado en el Perú*. Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos.
Gonzales de Olarte, E. 1997. Mercados en el ámbito rural peruano. In *Peru: el problema agrario en debate SEPIA VI* (eds) E. Gonzales de Olarte, B. Revesz and M. Tapia. Lima: Seminario Permanente de Investigación Agraria.
Gudeman, S. 2001 *The anthropology of economy: community, market, and culture*. Oxford: Blackwell.
Gudeman, S. and A. Rivera 1990. *Conversations in Colombia: the domestic economy in life and text*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Harris, O. 1982. Labour and produce in an ethnic economy, Northern Potosí, Bolivia. In *Ecology and exchange in the Andes* (ed.) D. Lehmann. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Harris, O. 1987. Phaxsima y qullqui: los poderes y significados del dinero en el Norte de Potosí. In *La participación indígena en los mercados surandinos* (eds) O. Harris, B. Larson and E. Tandeter. La Paz: Centro de Estudios de la Realidad Económica y Social. (Published in English as 'The earth and the state: the sources and meanings of money in northern Potosí, Bolivia'. In *Money and the morality of exchange* (eds) J. Parry and M. Bloch. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1989.)
Harris, O. 1995. Ethnic identity and market relations. In *Ethnicity, markets, and migration in the Andes: at the crossroads of history and anthropology* (eds) B. Larson and O. Harris. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
Harris, O. 2000. *To make the earth bear fruit: ethnographic essays on fertility, work and gender in Highland Bolivia*. London: Institute of Latin American Studies.
Hart, K. 1973. Informal income opportunities and urban employment in Ghana. *Journal of Modern African Studies* 11: 61–89.
Hart, K. 2000. *Money in an unequal world: Keith Hart and his memory bank*. New York: Textere.
Hurtado, I. 1999. Dinámicas territoriales: afirmación de las ciudades intermedias y surgimiento de

los espacios locales. In *Peru: el problema agrario en debate SEPIA VIII* (eds) I. Hurtado, C. Trivelli and A. Brack. Lima: Seminario Permanente de Investigación Agraria VIII.
Kahn, J. 1980. *Minangkabau social formations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Lajo, M. 1990. *Presente, pasado y futuro de la alimentación: importación de alimentos y depresión agropecuaria en el Perú 1944–2007*. Lima: Escuela de Administración de Negocios para Graduados / Instituto de Desarrollo Económico.
Lipton, M. 1968. The theory of the optimizing peasant. *Journal of Developing Areas* 4: 327–51.
Malinowski, B. and J. de la Fuente 1982. *Malinowski in Mexico: the economics of a Mexican market system*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
Mayer, E. 1974. *Reciprocity, self-sufficiency and market relations in a contemporary community in the central Andes of Peru*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
Mayer, E. 2002. *The articulated peasant: household economies in the Andes*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview.
Mayer, E. and M. Glave 1999. Alguito para ganar (a little something to earn): profits and losses in peasant economies. *American Ethnologist* 26: 344–69.
Mayer, E., M. Glave, S. Brush and J.E. Taylor 1992. *La chacra de papa: economía y ecología*. Lima: Centro Peruano de Investigación Social.
Mayer, E. and C. Zamalloa 1974. Reciprocidad en las relaciones de producción. In *Reciprocidad e intercambio en los Andes peruanos* (eds) E. Mayer and G. Alberti. Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos.
Mazurek, H. 1999. Dinámicas regionales o mutacion territorial: contracción y transformación del espacio Agropecuario peruano. In *Peru: el problema agrario en debate SEPIA VIII* (eds) I. Hurtado, C. Trivelli and A. Brack. Lima: Seminario Permanente de Investigación Agraria VIII.
Meisch, L.A. 2002. *Andean entrepreneurs: Otavalo merchants and musicians in the global arena*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
Mintz, S. 1959. Internal marketing systems as mechanisms of social articulation. In *Intermediate societies, social mobility, and communication: proceedings of the 1959 annual spring meeting, American Ethnological Society* (ed.) V.F. Ray. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
Paerregaard, K. 1997. *Linking separate worlds: urban migrants and rural lives in Peru*. Oxford: Berg.
Plattner, S. (ed.) 1989. *Economic anthropology*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Schejtman, A. 1988. The peasant economy: internal logic, articulation, and persistence. In *The political economy of development and underdevelopment* (ed.) C.K. Wilbur. New York: Random House.
Sheahan, J. 1999. *Searching for a better society: the Peruvian economy from 1950*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press.
Skinner, W.G. 1964. Marketing and social structure in rural China, part I. *Journal of Asian Studies* 34: 3–45.
Smith, C.A. 1976. Regional economic systems: linking geographical models and socioeconomic problems. In *Regional analysis: economic systems* (ed.) C.A. Smith. New York: Academic Press.
Smith, M.E. 1989. The informal economy. In *Economic anthropology* (ed.) S. Plattner. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Taussig, M.T. 1980. *The devil and commodity fetishism in South America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
Tax, S. 1963. *Penny capitalism: a Guatamalan Indian economy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Thomas, R.B. 1976. Energy flow in high altitude. In *Man in the Andes* (eds) P.T. Baker and M. Little. Stroudsburg, Pa.: Dowden, Hutchinson & Ross.
Vargas Llosa, M. 1987. In defense of the black market. *New York Times Magazine* (22 February): 28–31.
Weatherford, J. 1997. *The history of money: from sandstone to cyberspace*. New York: Crown.
Weismantel, M. 2001. *Cholas and pishtacos: stories of race and sex in the Andes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Wolf, E.R. 1966. *Peasants*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

26 Peasants

Mark Harris

There was a time in anthropology when peasants were the new tribals. While the number of anthropologists was growing, especially in the United States after the Second World War, the number of people who were living in culturally distinctive tribal groups was diminishing. What were these fledgling fieldworkers going to study? Building on the central methods and units of anthropological research, participant observation in rural villages, ethnographers headed off to new research sites, such as Central America and the Caribbean and Southeast Asia. And peasants became an established area of anthropology with its own questions and issues.

What characterised this work from the beginning was a concern to move away from the idea of what Robert Redfield (1956: 7) called the 'primitive isolate'. In that idea, tribal societies could be 'regarded without reference to anything much outside of them; they could be understood more or less by one man working alone. Nor need that man be a historian, for among these non-literates there was no history to learn' (1956: 6). This approach was wholly inadequate for understanding peasants because they were 'part-societies' (Kroeber 1948: 284), encompassed by a larger whole: the nation-state and global markets. So for Redfield (1956: 37) the question becomes:

> Considering a peasant community as a system of social relations, as a social structure, how shall we describe its relations with the world outside of that community? What are the modifications of concept and procedure that come about if we study a peasant village, thinking of it as a system of persisting important relationships among people? For peasantry … are such by reason in part of their long established interdependence with gentry and townspeople.

Almost 50 years on, this challenge remains central to anthropological work with peasants: a historical perspective, specifying the character of economic and political subordination, and methodological and conceptual rigour.

The field of peasant studies, influenced by wider political and policy considerations, has been marked by arguments for and against the proposition that peasants are a uniform social category (a class unto themselves). Those that argue for (for example, Redfield and Theodor Shanin among others) say that peasants constitute a separate reality, inhabiting an entirely different economic structure from feudalism, capitalism or socialism (though these authors differ in why they argue this view). Furthermore, they have forms of

social organisation and religious life that do not fully overlap with the wider whole in which they are embedded; so, for example, a distinction is drawn between the great (elite) and little (popular) traditions. For these reasons the study of peasants needs specific tools of analysis. Those against (for example, Marxists and modernisation theorists) point out that the processes that most affect the constitution of peasant society and economy (especially those in existence now) cannot be explained in terms of local interactions. So, analysts should begin with the wider social, political and economic processes of development that are at work in rural regions. It becomes impossible to talk of discrete units and their articulation, parts of a whole or a division between rural and urban areas, since all are connected. Indeed, the distinction between primitives as whole cultures and peasants as part cultures is also a fiction.

These positions are underpinned by disparate assumptions (rather than irreconcilable differences) about the nature of social life (they are also marked by the study of different kinds of peasant societies at different times). One stresses the moral ties that bind people living and working together and that create a sense of community. In the face of hardship or damaging external demands, the moral values forge coherence and make irrelevant the economic or political inequalities within a village. The term 'folk' is often associated with this approach, and it contrasts with the urban. The other begins with material realities, such as who owns the land on which crops are planted, what kind of ecological constraints are placed on production, where do the seeds come from, is the peasant in debt and so on, since they frame all conscious action. Each social, ecological or economic process affects peasant societies unevenly, leading to a great deal of variability, not just from region to region but in the same village as well. This will be exemplified later in this chapter with a study from the Brazilian Amazon.

The point to underline is that no theoretical or empirical generalisation about peasants can apply to all historical and contemporary situations. One estimate has them numbering about a fourth of the world's population (Cancian 1989: 128), living mostly in poor countries; another says they are, and have been, the majority of humankind (Shanin 1971: 17). Nevertheless, the importance of peasants to anthropology is their representation of a special economic situation. They are both in and out of the wider society and commodity markets. Despite their political and economic subordination they have a degree of independence, as seen in their control of land and labour. They embody a dual economic orientation, providing for themselves as well as for others at the same time. This allows them a great deal of flexibility and dynamism as they respond to external pressures. They are able to support themselves more easily than other marginal but not food-producing groups in times of hardship; as they withdraw they participate less in wider networks. Conversely, in more favourable conditions, such as a good return for a crop,

they will be more integrated and less isolated, and maybe less peasant, more capitalist farmer. At the same time, some peasant families may be split between parents, who work on the land full-time, and children, who have migrated to work in cities, waiting for land to become available. There may also be a division between men and women. In some villages there may be farmers who are also artisans or seamstresses, as well as livestock raisers, fishers, hunters and day labourers.

Recent anthropological research has focused on this flexible capacity to move between subsistence and market, between worker and small-scale producer of goods for trade. The challenge is to study how real people in actual economic contexts manage these cycles and competing demands. While brief and incomplete, this chapter seeks to capture complex economic realities facing peasants, and how this can be studied in anthropological terms.

Peasants and their dilemmas

Let me continue with the kinds of images and ideas that are most commonly associated with the word 'peasant' inside and outside of academic debates. From a Western European and North American perspective, it might be said that peasants and their place in society are relatively simple to understand. They farm using traditional technologies; they produce both for themselves and for a market; they consume both locally-made and market-bought goods; they live in domestic groups and in rural areas and sometimes migrate to towns in search of work. It is likely that the dominant representative of such impressions is the peasants who lived in the feudal society of medieval Europe, paying rent to a master and under his political control. But it could also be those food cultivators that developed with the need to feed the rise of the state and urban centres in the Middle East 5500 years ago. The values associated with these peasants might be quite varied. And it is here that things start getting more complicated.

These images might be tinged with nostalgia for a golden past or a rural way of life; peasants could be seen as the paragon of virtue because of their hard work, expertise in sustainable use of resources and ecological knowledge, and the smallness of scale of their family-organised production. Any modernisation or development of their economy is seen as an outrage. Peasants are the victims of vicious states (see Bernstein 1990). This is an agrarian populist and mostly conservative view, fitting well with the idea that the peasantry is a separate class.

On the other hand, peasants might be seen as backward, the remnants of a feudal or traditional order. For those who wanted to destroy this old system peasants were an impediment. They were, in the words Karl Marx (1971 [1850–52]: 230) used to describe the French peasantry of the nineteenth century, like a 'sack of potatoes' with no collective potential, since they were

focused on their own needs. For real agrarian capitalism (or socialism) to evolve, the peasantry needed to be either removed from the land (for example, the Highland Clearances in Scotland or the English enclosures) or collectivised in order to socialise production and provide for the state-run economy. While this is a revolutionary view, it also sees the peasantry as an autonomous class. V.I. Lenin (1982 [1899]), in his study of the pre-1917 Russian peasantry, showed that with the impact of commercialisation peasants became differentiated into several classes. Rich peasants turned into the agrarian bourgeoisie, and middle and poor peasants their workers.

These positions are challenged by the post-Redfield generation of anthropologists, such as Frank Cancian (1972), Joel Kahn (1980), Sidney Mintz (1989), William Roseberry (1983) and Eric Wolf (1966, 1971). Avoiding a generalised political-economy approach, they explored how peasants are variously constituted in different times and places. They claimed that peasants' strategies and values cannot be reduced to some primordial essence inherent in all peasantries. There may be multiple income-generating and subsistence activities taking place in one household, which involve them in different class relations. This also means that the household cannot be the elementary unit of production or consumption.

The concept of petty commodity production has added analytical precision to the study of peasants (Friedman 1980). The phrase refers to economic activities intended to generate income from market sales and in which there is a low capital investment and little dependence on hired labour. It brings clarity to the idea of the peasant economy because it reveals more precisely the economic relations involved. It shows that peasants can be both capitalists (owners of the means of production) and also workers (labourers who work for themselves). Bernstein says: 'as capitalists, they employ – and therefore exploit – themselves' (1990: 73).

So, why are the images and ideas often associated with peasants so problematic? Perhaps the most important reason, from an anthropological view, is the evolutionism contained in these ideas. They assume a peasant is somehow halfway between a tribal person and a factory worker, and thus between pre-capitalism and capitalism. With the feudal peasant as the template for all peasantries, it is impossible to appreciate their heterogeneity. We must not confuse the feudal peasants of Western Europe with the whole range of modern peasants in Eastern Europe, some Alpine regions, parts of sub-Saharan Africa, China and Latin America, who all co-exist with capitalism and yet are quite different in the ways they are configured in networks of power.[1] This is the reason why peasants are said not to constitute a sociocultural or economic type of universal proportions. They have various class relations, due to the variety of their economic activities, and do not have a consistent relationship with another class (see Wolf 2001).

This evolutionary paradigm derives from modernisation theory and sees peasants as emerging from tribal peoples with increasing commercialisation. Thus, with colonialism, taxation and incorporation into markets, the tribal group lost its autonomy and was forced to participate in a wider commercial environment and be incorporated in an imposed social hierarchy. This new peasantry retained aspects of the past and took on new ones. They were caught between tradition and modernity. Eventually the peasantry would leave the land and move to the cities, becoming proletarians, living off their own labour power.

I shall mention two difficulties, among many, in maintaining such a position. First, when analysts are confronted with features of peasant life that do not fit their image of 'modern' life, they tend to treat them as holdovers from the past rather than as present strategies. For instance, the peasant's organisational focus on the household is seen as part of a pre-capitalist past, not a local adaptation to or a result of the encounter with a commodity economy. Second, the confluence of technological change, industrialisation and growth of cities in places like England relegated the peasantry to marginal status. Their surplus was no longer needed to feed an urban population because the developing capitalised, 'industrial' farming system was able to dominate food production and distribution. However, in countries where there was an uneven relationship between industrial and agrarian change and population expansion (that is, in most countries of the southern hemisphere) the peasantry has remained important to the supply of cheap food and labour, even if there has also been significant development of large-scale agriculture. The reasons for the persistence of the peasantry under such conditions is at the heart of many discussions (see Harriss 1982, and especially Taussig 1982 in that volume).

Anthropologists, through fieldwork and consulting archives (to name only two of their methods for gathering data), are fundamentally engaged in holding on to the diversity, as well as the whole, of human experience. Hence the importance attached to attending to the heterogeneity of peasantries and avoiding a Eurocentric perspective.

If the various forms of peasants do not amount to a class or a type, what justification is there for using the term to cover radically different groups in history? The justification is an element of life that is fairly common in peasant societies and economies. This is its two-sidedness, what Wolf (1966: 12) called 'the peasant dilemma'. This relates to the two worlds they inhabit, mentioned above: the local village and the world outside. 'The perennial problem of the peasantry thus consists in balancing the demands of the external world against the peasants' need to provision their households' (Wolf 1966: 15).

Wolf distinguishes between four kinds of 'funds' which the peasant has

to supply. The first and most basic is the caloric minimum, food enough to stay alive. Also, to be able to continue from one year to the next, peasants need to replace equipment used or broken in the course of seasonal changes, as well as seeds for next year's crop. These two funds are the bottom line in terms of peasant reproduction, but critical also is the creation of a surplus, and cultural differences influence what is considered enough for the short term, and hence what is left as a surplus. There are two kinds of this extra provisioning: a ceremonial fund for celebrations, feasts and festivals (accompanying weddings, saints' days and so on) and a fund of rent, the amount of money or produce which goes to someone to whom the peasant is indebted. For Wolf this debt distinguishes peasants from other independent cultivators (such as tribespeople), since this is how political control is effected, making the peasant part of a hierarchical social order. 'The peasant's loss was the power holder's gain' (Wolf 1966: 10). Thus Wolf defines peasants as 'rural cultivators whose surpluses are transferred to a dominant group of rulers' (1966: 3–4). This advances on Redfield's approach (above) since it specifies an economic process, bringing conceptual clarity to peasants' subordination and the diversity of ways they produce surplus.

Their dilemma is the juggling of the various demands on them, which can be dealt with in different ways at different times; hence the heterogeneity from village to village and even within the same community. Factors that may be pertinent include the availability of labour and land and capital, access to credit through patrons, the kind of natural environment and so on (we shall look in more detail at such aspects in the case study presented later in this chapter). Most of all, it is the peasant valuation of labour in terms that are alien to market calculations that produces flexibility.

The analytical rigour Wolf gives to the concept of surplus is paralleled by the descriptive eloquence John Berger gives to the same concept. Influenced by Shanin Berger has written a trilogy on peasant life in the French Alps. Although not an anthropologist by training, he is most certainly an ethnographer (his novels are based on his living for many years in the community he writes about). In the Historical Afterword to *Pig earth*, the first book in the trilogy, he notes the 'peasant did not conceive of what is extracted from him as a surplus' (Berger 1985: 198). This is so for two reasons, one material and the other epistemological.

> 1) it was not a surplus because his family needs had not already been assured. 2) a surplus is an end product, the result of a long completed process of working and of meeting requirements. To a peasant, however, his enforced social obligations assumed the form of a preliminary obstacle … even if he were sharecropping, the master's share came *before* the basic needs of the family. (Berger 1985: 198; original emphasis)

In other words, surplus is a primary consideration in the day-to-day significance peasants give to their juggling of competing demands. 'Yet in meeting this root problem peasants may follow two diametrically opposed strategies. The first of these is to increase production; the second to curtail consumption' (Wolf 1966: 15).

In making sense of how the peasant economy is able to act in either of these ways, it is important to introduce the ideas of the Russian economist A.V. Chayanov (1966), especially his theory of peasant economics based in the fundamental relation between numbers of consumers and workers. This ratio was determined by the size of the family, on which all activity was based. An increase in productivity is possible if more labour becomes available or more land farmed (which means people working harder), or, more rarely, if existing obligations for the allocation of surplus are relaxed. These outcomes occur if the family grows and the children stay with the parents (more producers), or the power of landlords or bosses weakens (fewer obligations). But it could also come about from conversion to Protestantism, whereby previously large expenditures for Catholic festivals, for example, get redirected to the market (see Wolf 1966: 16).

In times of hardship, the peasant family can accommodate by reducing the amount produced for all the funds it has. Also, it can seek alternative economic strategies such as diversifying the number of crops for domestic consumption, or migrating to pursue wage labour for a while. So long as it can hold on to the land and other resources that form the base of its economic autonomy, it will be able to become more viable at a later date.

This is a summary of what can be a brutal, and often tragic, conflict between capitalist farming and peasant production. An excellent study of colonial Burmese and Vietnamese peasants and their attempts to secure their subsistence against change imposed from outside is given by Scott (1976). The commercialisation of agriculture involves the transformation of peasant society, since it may be accompanied by agrarian reform (favouring large landholders) and since large-scale capitalist farms need the labour of peasants. Thus begins the process of rural proletarianisation, or semi-proletarianisation. The extent to which capitalist farms displace the peasantry depends on the former's ability to absorb the labour of peasants. This can be achieved by taking over their land, reducing their holdings below a certain minimum subsistence size. This squeeze sends peasants out to sell their labour, thereby transferring their surplus to the capitalist farm in the form of cheap labour. At the same time, peasant labour is only partially incorporated because demand is seasonal. This combination of wage work on capitalist farms (or migration to cities) and peasant farming on small plots is precisely what is happening in many parts of Latin America. These households constitute a flexible labour reserve ready to be called up. What is more, the fact that they

also work plots of land using domestic unpaid labour means they can be paid less than workers who have no access to subsistence production. In this sense, peasants subsidise less 'efficient' forms of farming (see Taussig 1982).

The modern peasant dilemma is not the same as the articulation of pre- or non-capitalist and capitalist spheres. The peasant economy is not about the integration or duality of two kinds of economic rationality. Instead modern peasantries, the ones anthropologists have studied since the Second World War, are themselves products of the integration of different parts of the world. The relatively autonomous space they occupy is not the result of a pre-capitalism failing to be transformed by its encounter with capitalism. Rather, it is the opposite: the shape and character of the existence of peasants in the world today is determined by the wider system. And it speaks to the ability of the world economy to work without capitalisation of all economic forms. Put more specifically, capitalist farming takes advantage of peasant production in many parts of the world, and peasants in turn survive by diversifying their economic strategies. For some anthropologists (for example, Kearney 1996), this movement between many forms of economic life makes peasants unpeasant-like; indeed the term should be jettisoned. Kearney (1996: 141) uses 'polybian' ('many lives') to capture the ability to move between economic identities.

This might all seem rather abstract, and to shift the focus from peasants themselves to their place in scholarly debate. Many of the points are best illustrated with a real point of reference, though no case study can exemplify all the complexities of peasant life.

Brazilian Amazonian peasantries

Brazilian Amazonia was a central part of the Portuguese maritime empire from the middle of the seventeenth century.[2] By the middle of the eighteenth century the Amerindians who had lived near the main river thoroughfares of the region had been ravaged by disease, war and slavery. In 1750 the remaining population was organised into mission villages along the riverbank. With the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1757, a colonial order was imposed which aimed to stimulate production for export. It also encouraged miscegenation between Amerindians (women) and Portuguese colonists (men), which lead to the creation of an Amazonian peasantry during this period. A decade after Brazil's independence in 1821, this group was large and confident enough to mount a rebellion (the *cabanagem*) against the new country's elite, dominated by those from the south of the country. This movement was for Amazonian (that is, northern Brazilian) self-government but was brutally squashed, paving the way for the emergence of modern Amazonia. This is a region largely dependent on the labour of a free and mobile peasantry: plantation agriculture based on slavery, the norm for many parts of lowland South America until the

1870s, had a very high failure rate in the region. So, for example, the rubber that made possible the great industrial advances of the nineteenth century was collected mostly by small-scale independent producers who bartered with traders.

Amazonia might seem an unlikely focus for a discussion of anthropological studies of peasants.[3] After all, for many the region is known for its environment and indigenous people. My aim in using this example is to show that, despite the comparative heterogeneity in the study of the peasantry, there is advantage in the continued use of the term. And the key, as emphasised earlier, is not some check-list of peasant features, but the relationship between a peasantry and a more powerful group. This allows the term to encompass a variety of predominantly rural types (who may also spend periods in urban areas) and focuses on the relations of peasants to the market and the land. In this way we shall be able to see how the Amazonian peasantry has struggled to survive since the early nineteenth century, not only accommodating to the ups and downs of outside demands for certain products, but also developing and providing for itself.

The Amazonian peasantry (*caboclos*) is more accurately portrayed in the plural. The variety of environments and ways in which economic change has acted there has produced a complicated picture (see Cleary 1993). Nevertheless, these peasants share structural features that originate in their colonial background. In this respect, these Amazonian peasants are 'reconstituted', Mintz's (1989) term for Caribbean peasantries. Reconstituted peasantries are composed of people who were originally something else: in the Caribbean, slaves; in Amazonia, colonists or indigenous Amerindian slaves. They are distinct from feudal or 'primary' peasantries (see Schrauwers 2000: 127–8 for an Indonesian example of a reconstituted peasantry).

In Amazonia, these peasants had no pre-colonial background, because they were newly created (unlike the peasantries of the Andes and other closed corporate peasant communities; see Wolf 1955), and there was no shared folk memory of a past. Instead, the peasantry was a direct result of the colonial economy that was dominated by the gathering and production of tropical goods for export. From the beginning of the nineteenth century these goods were marketed principally through traders (*regatões*) who travelled in boats stopping at clients' houses along the riverbank, and who connected small-scale rural domestic production in remote areas with global markets.

This led to a form of trade (*aviamento*) based on barter calculated in terms of monetary values. It involved an informal credit relationship where manufactured goods are supplied in advance, in exchange for future payment in extractive and agricultural products such as rubber, manioc flour, timber, salted meat and fish, Brazil-nuts. The relationship resulted in the long-term indebtedness of the peasant, from which it was difficult to escape without

moving elsewhere. These structural features are present in the region today, though less strong around major urban centres such as Belém. In those areas, traders do not travel great distances. Rather, rural producers come to towns to market their goods, giving them some flexibility in where they sell.

In the area where I did my fieldwork, near the town of Óbidos in the state of Pará, this cycle of indebtedness involves a patron and client system. It is remarkably stable in that it does not matter what is being transacted in the relationship, since it is not dependent on a particular product, but on a political and cultural order. Take Antonio, for example, a peasant fisherman married to Nazaré, who lives in the rural hamlet of Parú (which we shall meet in a moment) and who owns a motorised boat capable of carrying fish and ice in an insulated box. He sells his fish to a processing factory for export, having caught them in lakes and rivers in the vicinity; he employs his sons and nephews for half of the profits. For each fishing expedition, Antonio needs nets, canoes, workers and their food, fuel for the motor and ice to keep the fish. The ice and fuel are provided on credit by the owner of the fish-processing factory, an economic relationship that can lead to political patronage, where superiors can command the votes of their clients. When the trip is over, the catch is taken back to the factory and handed over for a combination of cash in hand, reduction of debt and credit to buy foodstuffs. After expenses, the money is shared, half for Antonio and half for his workers.

But this relationship does not depend on fish. In the time of the jute industry, roughly 1930–70, the boss provided jute seeds and most, if not all, of the consumption needs for Antonio, as well as other peasant households, for the coming year. When the jute was harvested, Antonio and Nazaré had to give the crop to the boss to repay the credit extended earlier and to pay off other debts. Some bosses would offer higher prices for the jute than others, so there was a degree of competition between them. In such cases clients would sell their jute to the highest bidder, even if it was not the one who provided credit earlier. Jute growers would arrange to pay back the debts at another time. As far as I could tell, such differences in price had as much to do with bosses' estimates of the price they could get for their jute as they did with the personal deals struck between patrons and the clients. It was with the decline in the jute market in the 1970s that many bosses and their clients turned to other activities such as fishing and cattle raising, now among the dominant economic activities of peasant life on the floodplain (see McGrath et al. 1993).

The activities just described are forms of petty commodity production. People also work as wage labourers and have gardens where they produce subsistence crops. These three economic forms – petty commodity production, wage work, subsistence agriculture – each have their own labour relations and trading arrangements, and are combined in peasant households. The emphasis put on each changes with cycles within the household itself and in the regional

economy, not to mention individual preference for certain kinds of work. Thus, two neighbouring households may have quite different economic profiles and responses to external demands. This dynamic, fluid situation characterises the floodplain village of Parú.

Parú is on the north bank of the Amazon, and has about 1000 people, all of whom are related by marriage or blood. Oral histories indicate that it was in the first half of the nineteenth century that people starting settling the floodplain areas near towns as part of an independent peasantry. Parú has no ethnic identity, being composed of people who are descended from Portuguese and Indian mixed unions (and possibly runaway slaves), as well as Italian peasants who arrived at the beginning of the twentieth century and married locally. The population is not homogeneous, since there is a degree of differentiation in people's access to resources and ability to mobilise labour, so that some are richer than others. This can be partly explained by household developmental cycles (for example, parents holding on to sons' labour helps create wealth), but these differences are real and determine the ability of families to respond to market changes: if they fail to adjust, children will marry out, possibly migrate, and the family unit will no longer exist.

Land tenure is based on a notion of collective ownership of the community's territory, which is central for understanding the Amazonian peasantry. Individuals who have cleared an area to plant a garden or build a house are considered the 'owners' of these small areas. However, their rights to that land are provisional, depending on their continuing to use it. Thus, strategies of landholding and inheritance are an important factor in the reproduction of livelihoods. These people's landholding is not valorised by the market, since it is part of a non-monetised sphere of communal and kin relations. However, land near towns is increasingly coveted by cattle ranchers (as it has long been near the bigger towns, such as Belém and Manaus). This demand is likely to bring this land into the commodified sphere. For now, though, all that the people of Parú have to do is stay put; which is, of course, asking a lot. They engage in a bewildering diversity of economic activities: cattle raising, fishing, hunting and gathering, agriculture, artisanal work and trading, most of which could be for both subsistence and market purposes. They engage in monetary exchanges between themselves as well as with bosses, but also exchange other things, such as labour.

Because they pursue a variety of economic strategies, people in Parú are mobile, and they are adept at invoking the most distant kin and affinal ties to find places to stay and gain access to resources. Some movements are seasonal. Also, however, people tend to spend time in urban and rural areas at different points in their lives, depending on their or their children's educational needs, or their access to temporary paid employment. When they are in towns, they go on short fishing trips (for both subsistence and the

market), or help friends or neighbours on their landholdings (for money). They may also do seasonal work in the Brazil-nut factory or do odd jobs for pay (some anthropologists have seen this mixture of urban and rural forms of livelihood as the peasantisation of cities; for example, Roberts 1978). As this description of people's economic activities suggests, what is important is not the place where they live, but the social connections they pursue. Over the course of their lives they depend on the family networks that allow access to natural resources and in some cases allow control of labour.

Understanding this peasant economy is not difficult only because people are so mobile and have such a range of activities. As well, much of what takes place is invisible (Nugent 1993): it happens outside of the purview of the state and its tax and statistical accounting bodies. Activities do not get officially recorded, and are hidden by the larger and better remunerated forms of production associated with the market. Some is illegal, such as selling turtles or the skins of animals, but there is also the vast and inchoate sphere of non-commoditised relations, such as labour exchange, ceremonial feasts and family 'help'. How these are combined and the proportion of effort given to each varies historically.

The autonomy that peasant life on the floodplain affords rests on the ability to maintain access to and control over 'unvalorised' natural resources, such as land, water, fish, animals and trees. This autonomy is a product of the development of an economic and political system predicated on the control of trade rather than of production. People value this autonomy highly, constantly contrasting it with the life of the urban dweller who has to pay for everything. The core of this autonomy is the ability to decide how to deploy their own labour (and their children's labour if they are living with their parents). And most peasants know the value of their labour, in terms of both physical effort and monetary cost (see Harris 2000). But this autonomy is constrained by domestic needs and commercial considerations.

These needs and considerations mean that when peasants can get a good return for their products, their economy will expand and the focus of economic activities will tend to narrow down to producing one product. However, when the market for that central product declines, their economy will contract and they will return to a more diverse exploitation of economic options. In other words, the weaker the market opportunities for peasants, the stronger their internal, non-market relations have to be. The viability of the peasant economy is in inverse relationship to that of the global market for their products. During most of the twentieth century this demand has been relatively weak, and now the floodplain peasantries are threatened by large-scale commercial fisheries and cattle ranching.

I want to illustrate how this expansion and contraction work, with the case of Antonio, married to Nazaré. He is one of seven children, five of whom

remained on their parents' parcel of land, which was divided equally among them on their father's death. In the 1950s and 1960s, Antonio told me, in the run up to the flood season (March to May) he and Nazaré worked very hard planting jute, which is labour intensive. In the low water period (September to December), when he was not planting jute, he was fishing. Throughout the year, he and Nazaré also grew a few subsistence crops. Over time, sales of fish and jute proved to be profitable, and they were able to buy a small motorised boat that allowed him to transport and store more fish. The price of jute then declined, and he shifted all his efforts to commercial fishing, any profits being used to buy cattle, a form of savings. Antonio and his wife have not been able to do all of this on their own. They have thirteen children, all of whom have remained living near their parents, partly because they have a relatively secure economic base (and do not have to pool the money they earn). Without their contribution the couple would not have been able to maintain these economic activities, which are dominated by petty commodity production rather than wage work or peasant farming. Antonio takes great pride in the fact that he has never sold his labour to a patron.

Antonio's brothers were not so successful. In particular, they could not shift to fishing when jute declined, in the way that Antonio did. They had not built up the same level of resources as Antonio and Nazaré, nor had they access to the same kin-based pool of labour. Nowadays the brothers and their families have to rely on a greater diversity of strategies, and this means that they have to decrease their consumption demands (Wolf 1966). They have also had to sell their labour, unlike Antonio, and depend on the money their sons and daughters earn selling and from wage labour.

Antonio and his brothers show that some people have been able to adapt to the economic transformations of the thirty or so years, and some have not. In Lenin's (1982 [1899]) terms, Antonio and Nazaré are middle peasants, and are in a good position to adapt. Expansion and contraction do not occur uniformly, and the ability to negotiate new demands depends on the success of the previous enterprise and the ability to shift resources (including past profits) without loss of wealth. Also, it is important to remember that the success of petty commodity production as an economic strategy is not certain. In other circumstances, such a strategy may fail, especially if concentrating on a few activities in a petty commodity repertoire leads to the loss of skills that are vital to survival at times of contraction. This loss would make a return to peasant subsistence extremely difficult, and might force migration to cities in search of work.

I have used this material from Brazilian Amazonia to show the range of economic strategies open to rural people: subsistence-oriented agriculture and fishing, petty commodity production, wage labour. The existence of this range is central if peasants are to survive in a hostile commercial environment.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown how peasants are an integral part of the capitalist economy: producing food and other commodities cheaply and providing low-cost labour for large rural farms and urban factories. This indeed appears to be their economic significance over the last 200 years. Peasants and their dynamic and hybrid strategies can find interstices in the dominant institutional forms which allow them to survive and even prosper. However, increased commodification does not work evenly, and the different levels at which they can tolerate a squeeze on reproduction leads to inequalities among villagers and within families, as they are incorporated into the wider economy through different kinds of work.

As peasants are drawn more and more into commodity spheres and lose access to land and other important rural resources, concepts that dominated earlier scholarly work on peasants, such as folk traditionalism, economic backwardness and the autonomy of subsistence production, have been rejected. The change in focus could not be more stark: the view of peasants common in the 1950s and 1960s, as culturally unable to respond to change, has given way to the sober commemoration of their flexibility in the face of change. Like all sorts of other problem words, 'peasant' evokes contradictory representations and realities. It is a useful pointing term, like the way one points out a place in the distance. Come close, and it looks quite different. If it is possible to maintain the term as a short-hand for agrarian petty commodity producers who also engage in wage labour and subsistence fishing and farming, migrate over seasons and lifetimes, and are subordinate to wider political forces and economic processes, then it is worth keeping. Peasant economy is special because it is a mixture of strategies, rather than a qualitatively different economic order. And peasant activity can be seen as a local and meaningful expression of forces and processes that extends historically and globally.

Notes

1. We should not assume that we know what capitalism is. The term often covers a wide variety of forms: merchant capital with which petty commodity production is linked, and advanced industrial corporate capitalism.
2. The sources I have used for this summary include Cleary (1993, 1998), Hecht and Cockburn (1989), MacLachlan (1973) and Parker (1985).
3. See Forman (1975) and Souza Martins (2002) for summaries and analyses of the different kinds of Brazilian peasantry. In writing on Amazonian peasants I am drawing on the work of Cleary (1993), Lima-Ayres (1992), McGrath et al. (1993) and Nugent (1993), as well as my own (Harris 2000).

References

Berger, J. 1985. *Pig earth*. London: Chatto & Windus.

Bernstein, H. 1990. Taking the part of peasants. In *The food question: profit versus people* (eds) H. Bernstein, B. Crow, M. Mackintosh and C. Martin. London: Earthscan.

Cancian, F. 1972. *Change and uncertainty in a peasant economy: the Maya corn farmers of Zinacantan*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Cancian, F. 1989. Economic behaviour in peasant communities. In *Economic anthropology* (ed.) S. Plattner. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Chayanov, A.V. 1966. *On the theory of peasant economy*. (D. Thorner, B. Kerblay and R.E.F. Smith, eds) Homewood, Ill.: American Economic Association by Irwin.
Cleary, D. 1993. After the frontier: problems with political economy in the modern Brazilian Amazon. *Journal of Latin American Studies* 25: 331–49.
Cleary, D. 1998. 'Lost altogether to the civilised world': race and the Cabangem in northern Brazil, 1750–1850. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 40: 109–35.
Forman, S. 1975. *The Brazilian peasantry*. New York: Columbia University Press.
Friedman, H. 1980. Household production and the national economy: concepts for the analysis of agrarian formations. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 7: 154–84.
Harris, M. 2000. *Life on the Amazon: the anthropology of a Brazilian peasant village*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Harriss, J. (ed.) 1982. *Rural development: theories of peasant economy and agrarian change*. London: Hutchison.
Hecht, S. and A. Cockburn 1989. *The fate of the forest*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
Kahn, J. 1980. *Minangkabau social formations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Kearney, M. 1996. *Reconceptualising the peasantry: anthropology in global perspective*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview.
Kroeber, A. 1948. *Anthropology: race, language, culture, psychology, prehistory*. (New ed.) New York: Harcourt.
Lenin, V. 1982 (1899). The differentiation of the peasantry. In *Rural development: theories of peasant economy and agrarian change* (ed.) J. Harriss. London: Hutchison.
Lima-Ayres, D. 1992. The social category Caboclo: history, social organisation and outsider's social classification of the rural population of an Amazonian region. Doctoral thesis, University of Cambridge.
MacLachlan, C. 1973. The Indian directorate: forced labour acculturation in Portuguese America (1757–1799). In *The colonial roots of modern Brazil* (ed.) D. Alden. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Marx, K. 1971 (1850–52). Peasantry as a class. In *Peasants and peasant societies* (ed.) T. Shanin. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
McGrath, D., F. Castro, C. Futemma, B. Amaral and J. Calabria 1993. Fisheries and the evolution of resource management on the Lower Amazon floodplain. *Human Ecology* 21 (3): 167–96.
Mintz, S. 1989. *Caribbean transformations*. New York: Columbia University Press.
Nugent, S. 1993. *Amazonian Caboclo society: an essay on invisibility and peasant economy*. Oxford: Berg.
Parker, E. (ed.) 1985. *The Amazon Caboclo: historical and contemporary perspectives*. (Studies in Third World Societies 32.) Williamsburgh, Va.: College of William and Mary.
Redfield, R. 1956. *Peasant society and culture*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Roberts, B. 1978. *Cities of peasants: the political economy of urbanization in the Third World*. London: Arnold.
Roseberry, W. 1983. *Coffee and capitalism in the Venezuelan Andes*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
Schrauwers, A. 2000. *Colonial 'reformation' in the highlands of Central Sulawesi, Indonesia, 1892–1995*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
Scott, J. 1976. *The moral economy of the peasant: rebellion and subsistence in southeast Asia*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
Shanin, T. (ed.) 1971. *Peasants and peasant societies*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
Souza Martins, J. de 2002. Representing the peasantry? Struggles for/about land in Brazil. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 29: 300–35.
Taussig, M. 1982. Peasant economics and the development of capitalist agriculture in the Cauca valley, Colombia. In *Rural development: theories of peasant economy and agrarian change* (ed.) J. Harriss. London: Hutchison.

Wolf, E. 1955. Types of Latin American peasantry: a preliminary discussion. *American Anthropologist* 57: 452–71.
Wolf, E. 1966. *Peasants*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
Wolf, E. 1971. *Peasant wars of the twentieth century*. (Maps by W. Roberts.) London: Faber & Faber.
Wolf, E. 2001. Is the peasantry a class? In *Pathways of power: building an anthropology of the modern world*, E. Wolf. Berkeley: University of California Press.

27 Value: anthropological theories of value

David Graeber

Economics might be said to have begun largely as a series of reflections on the origin and nature of value in human society. But those days are long since past. Nowadays, economists tend to limit themselves to producing mathematical models of how economic actors allocate scarce resources in pursuit of profit, or how consumers rank their preferences; they do not ask what those actors are ultimately trying to achieve in life or why consumers want to consume the things they do. The latter sorts of questions, questions of value, have been largely abandoned to anthropologists, sociologists or philosophers.

It is not entirely clear, however, whether an anthropological theory of value actually exists. Anthropologists often talk as if one does, even as if there are quite a few of them. But it is difficult to find anyone willing to describe clearly what such an anthropological theory of value might look like. Instead, one usually finds three different uses of the term, and a feeling that on some ultimate theoretical level they are the same. They are:

1. 'values' in the sociological or philosophical sense. This is the sense in which an anthropologist might say 'seventeenth-century Hurons placed a high value on individual autonomy', or a politician might speak of 'family values';
2. 'value' in the classic economic sense, in which one might speak of the market value of a house, food processor or ton of pig-iron;
3. 'value' in a more specific linguistic usage, particularly the structural linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure. He argued that the meaning of a word was essentially a 'negative value', a contrast with other words in the same lexicon, as the colour 'red' is defined in contrast to 'yellow', 'blue', 'brown', 'pink'. One might call this 'value as contrast' or 'value as meaningful difference'.

What would it mean to say these are all, ultimately, versions of the same thing? Presumably, several things. It would imply the existence of some kind of symbolic system that defines the world in terms of what is important, meaningful, desirable or worthwhile in it. This system of value would presumably extend to everything from feelings about what one might like to eat for breakfast to what human beings basically owe one another or how one

wishes to be remembered after one is dead. And it would imply that there is a way to understand how this system translates into practice.

Most anthropologists use 'value' in a way that suggests they believe such symbolic systems do exist. Most nowadays are also pretty certain that old-fashioned ways of talking about bounded 'societies' or 'cultures' are not the best way to approach the problem, that instead people negotiate their way through a variety of different 'domains' or 'regimes' of value. But beyond that, there is very little agreement as to how these are actually organised.

This is too bad, because these are important questions, and many critical unresolved issues in social theory turn on the answers. Let me then briefly describe the background in Western economic theory, outline some of the chief ways in which anthropologists have, over the last hundred years or so, used 'value' and, finally, examine some recent attempts to create a synthesis.

Value in Western economic theory

The standard history of Western economic theory begins with the mercantilists and physiocrats of the early eighteenth century, then moves on to the political economy school (Adam Smith, David Ricardo, Karl Marx), but sees all of these essentially as precursors. Modern (neoclassical) economics was born from the marginal revolution of the 1870s. It is interesting that what set each of these schools apart from the others was, above all, its views on the origin of value, which over time became increasingly disembodied and subjective. Mercantilists located wealth in precious metals; physiocrats argued that since the ultimate source of value was nature, all social wealth was ultimately derived from agriculture; the political economists claimed that value was a product of human labour (in other words, that it emerged through the body, at exactly the point where our minds become a physical force in nature). For neoclassical economists it transcended the physical altogether, and became simply a subjective measure of desire. From their time on, the value of an object became increasingly indistinguishable from its price: how much potential buyers were willing to give up to acquire some product on the market. It exists only in the eye of the beholder.

It is important to bear in mind that, for earlier economists, value was assumed to be different from price. People were willing to pay money for an item *because* they saw it as valuable for some other reason. True, prices would also fluctuate owing to the vagaries of supply and demand; but all other things being equal, the market price of a loaf of bread, it was assumed, would tend to gravitate towards what was often called its 'natural price', its inherent desirability, measured in relation to the desirability of other items. It was in this sense that value was seen as the regulative principle of prices. Economics could only free itself from such a notion when it purged itself of all moral

elements; as a result, the marginal revolution really involved eliminating value from economics entirely.

To understand this, consider Smith's famous statement of the so-called 'paradox of value', which he posed in explaining the distinction, originally posed by Aristotle, between value in use and value in exchange:

> The word value, it is to be observed, has two different meanings, and sometimes expresses the utility of some particular object, and sometimes the power of purchasing other goods which the possession of that object conveys. The one may be called 'value in use'; the other, 'value in exchange.' The things which have the greatest value in use have frequently little or no value in exchange; and, on the contrary, those which have the greatest value in exchange have frequently little or no value in use. Nothing is more useful than water: but it will purchase scarce anything; scarce anything can be had in exchange for it. A diamond, on the contrary, has scarce any value in use; but a very great quantity of other goods may frequently be had in exchange for it. (Smith 1776: 28)

Now, the standard line, repeated endlessly in economic textbooks, is that Smith was unable to resolve this paradox because he lacked an adequate theory of supply and demand. His mistake was to, naively, contrast what an economist would now call the total utility, the overall usefulness, of water, with the total utility of diamonds, where he should have been looking at the marginal utility of any unit of water: since the market price of any one unit of a product is the lowest amount a potential buyer is willing to pay for it, and since most people already have access to water, the price they would be willing to pay for an additional unit is likely to be very low. It was because Smith was unable to see this that he was forced to invent the famous labour theory of value, concluding that the high price of diamonds must derive from the fact that it takes all sorts of toil and trouble to produce one, while water falls from the sky. According to the usual account, then, this mistake led economics down a series of hopeless dead ends, ranging from Ricardo's attempt to calculate the natural price of a commodity through the total number of 'man hours' that went into producing it, to pretty much the entire corpus of Marx.

This is all a bit odd because, as others pointed out (for example, Fayazmanesh 1998), there is no reason to believe that Smith even saw this as a paradox, or felt that there was anything to be explained here. He was trying to make a very different sort of point. Smith was, after all, a professor of moral philosophy; economics had, until very recently, been considered a branch of ethics; and the example he used, of diamonds and water, had a long history from theological arguments within the medieval Catholic church.

The paradox of value first appears, in fact, in the works of St Augustine, who in *The city of God* (IX: 16) noted that there was a great disparity between how one might evaluate things 'according their own merits' (by which

standard plants are clearly superior to stones, animals to plants, humans to animals) and how humans value them: we would much rather have bread or gold in our house than mice or fleas; people will often spend more money for a horse or jewel than for a slave. For Augustine, this was a result of our fallen nature, because of which we are cursed with endless physical needs and desires. These distort our perceptions. We come to see things through our own needs (use value) rather than their absolute worth, their position on the Great Chain of Being and, hence, proximity to God.

Such reflections were of interest to Scholastic thinkers of the Middle Ages seeking a way to calculate the 'just price' of a given commodity. Roman law had defined a just price as anything a buyer and seller were willing to agree on, but this could easily lead to results that flew in the face of any sort of morality. A starving prisoner might be willing to trade his entire fortune for an egg, but that did not make it right to make him do so. A fair or just price, therefore, should have some relation to the 'intrinsic worth' or 'value' of what you were selling. But how should that be calculated? As theologians from St Thomas Aquinas on were quick to realise, Augustine's scale of natural perfection was not much help here, since we are dealing with the domain of human needs.[1] But basing intrinsic value on the ability of an object to fulfil human needs did not really work either; first this was not an intrinsic quality, it was relational; second, as the example of water and diamonds revealed, there was little systematic relation between needs and prices anyway. Aquinas concluded that a just price would simply be one the seller would himself have been willing to pay for some commodity; others, notably members of the rival Franciscan school of Duns Scotus, which was far more suspicious of wealth and private property, argued instead that intrinsic value had to be based in its costs of production, which made labour the main source of value.

In *The wealth of nations*, Smith was clearly drawing on this moral tradition. But as an Enlightenment optimist, he was also committed to the proposition that God had designed the world so that it would essentially run on its own accord for the benefit of humans. Hence his famous argument that the market would, if allowed to work by its own logic, produce an optimal result 'as by an invisible hand', an effect which he explicitly said was a result of Divine Providence. Here, too, he was not as much interested in a scientific argument about the reasons for price fluctuations as in a moral argument that in the absence of interference, market prices would indeed always tend to gravitate around the natural price (1776: 51); which in turn meant that people would indeed be justly rewarded for their labours.

The problem was that the latter proposition soon became very hard to defend. Ricardo, who tried to develop Smith's labour theory of value, was soon to discover what he called an 'iron law' that held wages down; this, of course, set the stage for Marx's critique of the entire wage system as turning

human creativity itself into an abstraction that can be bought or sold, necessarily involving alienation, exploitation and the destruction of most of what makes life meaningful or worthwhile. The marginalist revolution simply tossed the problem aside by redefining economics as the study of price formation. After it, any talk of intrinsic value came to be seen as meaningless metaphysics, a primitive idea of some kind of invisible substance that scientific economics could only reject. Value *was* price, and nothing more. It was purely subjective. By the 1930s, value itself, once considered the main subject of economics, had largely faded away as an object of theoretical reflection. Whatever it was that ultimately motivated people to want the things they did, either it lay outside the purview of economics (a matter for psychologists, perhaps) or, for many, it was inherently unknowable; nothing could be said about it at all.[2] In this way economic theory became the model for a new sort of extreme moral relativism, embodied nowadays in rational-choice approaches to human behaviour that, rather paradoxically, claim a higher moral authority precisely because they are 'value-free'. In other words, it is no longer necessary to try to prove (like Smith) that the market rewards us justly for our labours, because there is no standard of justice outside of the market itself.

Back to anthropology

The ethical trick largely lies in the word 'rational'. Market behaviour is by definition rational. In the world as viewed by contemporary, free-market economists (which is, increasingly, identical to the world as viewed by governments and other ruling institutions), anthropologists and their like are therefore relegated to two roles. One is to describe the causes of 'irrational' or 'inefficient' market behaviour: why people, especially non-Western people, sometimes do not act in the way economic theory says they should. The other is to describe the logic of consumption, which is the one area in which people are not really supposed to be acting rationally, but rather, constructing their unique individual or ethnic identities, or perhaps forging social ties (for example, Douglas and Isherwood 1979; Miller 1987, 1995; Sahlins 1976). Either can lead to employment for anthropologists willing to go that route, either for development agencies or advertising firms. But neither are exactly about value.

The promise of value theory has always been to do much more. It has been to understand the workings of any system of exchange (including free-market capitalism) as part of larger systems of meaning, one containing conceptions of what the cosmos is ultimately about and what is worth pursuing in it. Such systems of meaning meant that the kind of moral and ethical questions that Aquinas or Smith felt were at the heart of the matter could not simply be pushed aside.

I began by observing that those who wish to revive a more comprehensive value theory of this sort generally begin by searching for the common basis between values in the sociological sense, economic value, and the meaningful difference of the linguistic use of the word. There are many reasons to believe such a common basis should exist. For instance, anthropologists, much like sociologists or philosophers, have long been accustomed to speak of values in the plural sense, as one does when, for instance, one says that in Mediterranean societies 'honour' is a key value or that, in America, 'freedom' is. Within capitalist societies, the word is normally invoked to refer to all those domains of human action that are not governed by the laws of the market: thus we hear about family values, spiritual values, values in the domains of art and political ideals. In other words, 'values' begin precisely where (economic) 'value' ends. This would certainly imply that we are dealing with two different refractions of the same thing and, therefore, that we would be justified in searching for their common basis.

When economists, or those trying to apply economic approaches to anthropology, actually come to grips with their material, they often come to surprisingly similar conclusions. Neoclassical theory assumes that all human behaviour involves the allocation of resources in pursuit of some kind of scarce good in such a way as to achieve the most product from the least sacrifice. However, anyone who tries to apply this to anthropology will encounter cases where people seem to be vying to sacrifice as much as possible: potlatches, contests of generosity, gratuitous displays of wealth. The usual explanation is that they are trying to 'maximise' some other sort of value: prestige, honour, fame, religious merit; precisely the sort of values from which most anthropologists begin.

When anthropologists look for theories of value

Every few decades, anthropologists do seem to start thinking along these lines. It usually seems to occur during moments of crisis. So far, there have been three main moments in which 'value' was widely bandied about. The first was the late 1950s, when both British social anthropology and American cultural anthropology had entered a kind of theoretical doldrums, and there was much talk of value theory as a way to break out. The second was the early 1980s, when the great theoretical problem was how to break with structuralism and develop some sort of theory of practice. Arguably, the same thing is happening today.

The reasons for these different instances are, ultimately, similar. Anthropologists had created very powerful models for analysing total social systems, but ran into intractable problems trying to square these models with the reasons why real people do the things they do. One might say this is really the reflection of a much broader dilemma within social theory (see, for example,

Caillé 2000), of how to square systemic approaches with individualistic ones. The first begin by imagining some total system or structure – a society, a culture, a world-system – and then try to understand how it is maintained and reproduced over time. The other starts with individual actors pursuing something, and sees society largely as the effect of their actions (here economics and its derivatives, like rational-choice theory, have been the paradigm). Anthropologists have always tended to prefer systemic approaches, but at certain points the theoretical contradictions within a given approach become so overwhelming that there is a sense of crisis. At such points, value tends to become important as a way to bring the advantages of individualistic approaches back in. In the 1950s this happened to British structural–functional anthropology, which for decades had been developing Arthur Radcliffe-Brown's idea that a society could be seen as a kind of organism, whose parts (institutions) all play some role in maintaining social order. By the 1950s they had taken this about as far as it could go. The problem, they discovered, was to understand (1) how individual members of such a society are motivated to maintain and reproduce it, and (2) how, if they were, societies ever change. Some kind of value theory seemed just the thing to provide the answers. Sir Edward Evans-Pritchard was already playing around with such ideas in 1940 when he described the Nuer concept of *cieng* ('home') as a value in both the linguistic and the political sense (1940: 135–8), but it was Raymond Firth (1964) who really ended up developing the idea, suggesting it might be possible to conceive two analytical levels, the one of 'social structure', the fixed world of clans, lineages, age-sets, village moieties and the like that anthropologists had got so good at describing, and another of 'social organisation', where individuals pursue value in a more loose, pragmatic fashion.

In the United States the problem was slightly different. Ever since Franz Boas, American anthropology had dedicated itself to the study of something it called 'culture', defining 'cultures' as symbolic systems, total systems for understanding the world which could not be reduced to individual psychology. When people from different cultures looked at a forest or an ocean or another human being, they literally saw different things. Here the problem was to identify the organising principle of culture. Was it language, or something more like artistic style? Was it based in environment, in certain key symbols, or psychological complexes writ large? Without understanding that, it would be impossible to compare one culture with another. By the 1950s this approach too had something like a crisis.

Into this quandary walked Klyde Kluckhohn, who believed anthropology could be reconceived as a comparative study of values. He fixed on the county of Rimrock, New Mexico, (1951b, 1956; Vogt and Albert 1966) as the first test case for his 'values project'. Rimrock was divided between five different

communities: Navaho, Zuñi, Mormon, Texan and Mexican-American. Its existence, Kluckhohn thought, provided as close as one could get in anthropology to a controlled experiment, a chance to see how five groups of people with profoundly different systems of value adapted to the same environment. He sent off students to study each, remaining behind at Harvard to lead a seminar on values. With help from Florence Kluckhohn, a sociologist, and Edith Albert, a philosopher, he produced a succession of working papers that aimed to hone his theoretical terms.

Kluckhohn defined 'values' as 'conceptions of the desirable': they were ideas that played some sort of role in influencing the choices people make between different possible courses of action (1951a: 395). By 'desirable' he meant that values are not simply what people want (even though desires are largely social, real people want all sorts of different things); they are ideas about what people *ought* to want. They are the criteria by which people decide whether specific desires are legitimate and worthwhile, or not. So, while values are not necessarily ideas about the meaning of life, they are about what one could justifiably want from it. The problem, though, comes with the second half of the definition: the specific ways that these conceptions relate to behaviour.

In traditional value analysis this is not much of a problem, because traditional value analysis is largely interpretative. One begins by identifying some key term: one observes that members of the Navaho community in Rimrock often talk about the importance of something they call 'harmony', or the Texans talk about something they call 'success'. One then proceeds to interpret precisely what 'harmony' or 'success' means to them, and then places these definitions in a larger cultural context. The problem is that such terms tend to be highly idiosyncratic: it is difficult to make a systematic comparison between, say, the Texan idea of 'success' and the Hindu idea of 'purity', and this was precisely what Kluckhohn wanted to do.

To resolve the problem, Kluckhohn proposed a second, less abstract level, 'value orientations': 'assumptions about the ends and purposes of human existence', the nature of knowledge, 'what human beings have a right to expect from each other and the gods, about what constitutes fulfillment and frustration' (Kluckhohn 1949: 358–9). Value orientations thus mixed ideas of the desirable with assumptions about the nature of the world in which one acts. They were also far more uniform, and hence easier to compare. Kluckhohn argued that it should be possible to construct a basic list of existential questions that every culture had to answer: are human beings good or evil? Should their relations with nature be based on harmony, mastery or subjugation? Should one's ultimate loyalties be to oneself, one's group or to other individuals? Should one's time orientation be primarily to the future, the present or the past? All this was quite innovative, and departed radically from

the extreme relativism of the American cultural anthropology of the day (basically, Kluckhohn had invented what was later to be called the 'cosmological approach'), but it never quite worked. He and his students found it very difficult to move from this super-refined level to concrete values like harmony or success, let alone to such mundane questions as what sort of crops people prefer to grow or what sort of marriages they considered to be incestuous.

In the end, the values project came apart. The Rimrock study was published without conclusions; nowadays the project is ignored or seen as yet another dead end. Some (Dumont 1982; Edmonson 1973; compare Nuckolls 1998) suggest that things might have been different if Kluckhohn had lived to see the advent of models from structural linguistics. However, when those models emerged in the 1960s they made all previous debates seem irrelevant. Interest in value did not swell again until the early 1980s, when anthropology was again trying to break out of totalising systems, this time the structuralist models themselves. But by that time 'values' was no longer considered an interesting term; instead, the focus was on Saussurean ideas of value.

Saussurean syntheses

It might be surprising that structuralist, Saussurean models of value largely displaced 'values' in the old Kluckhohnian sense, since structuralism had little to say about questions of value. Structuralists were concerned with systems of knowledge, the 'codes' by which people organise experience, the means by which they interpret messages, rather than what they are trying to accomplish by saying them. The code or system or structure was assumed to exist on some abstract plane outside of time and human action, in the same way that language as an abstract system of rules and meanings exists apart from any particular act of speech. From another perspective, though, the Saussurean approach to value as meaningful difference might seem the perfect thing to mediate between systemic approaches (which analysis of 'values' would seem to call for) and individualistic ones, emphasising value in the economic sense. After all, Saussurean approaches insist that the meaning of a term can only be understood in the context of a total system: the meaning of 'river', for example, is defined in relation to all the other words in the same lexicon ('stream', 'brook', 'inlet', and so on). Yet at the same time, Saussureans tend to see value as existing in the eye of the beholder, just like neoclassical economists do.

Its approach to both system and individual levels has made this approach attractive to those studying consumption. The distinctions between different sorts of consumer goods provide a map of different sorts of human identity, and what sort of person one is in consumer society is a function of what sort of goods one has. But one can apply Saussurean models to very different sorts

of society as well. In her famous analyses of Melanesian 'gift economies', Marilyn Strathern (1987, 1988, 1992) has made a number of brilliant and provocative arguments about how objects are valued as 'ways of making relationships visible'. Such economies are profoundly different from commodity economies, but there too, 'value' is a matter of how something is defined in another person's eyes, as part of some larger system of categories (Graeber 2001).

The early 1980s saw a series of attempts to break out of classical structuralism, usually by trying to develop some sort of theory of action. This eventually paved the way for the various forms of post-structuralism and practice theory that dominate the intellectual field today. For some, this meant returning to economic theories of value (for example, Appadurai 1986; Thomas 1991). For others, it meant exactly the opposite, retooling structuralism so as to create a new and very explicit systemic form. The choice seemed to be largely between the economists and de Saussure.

The most prominent among the latter was the French anthropologist Louis Dumont. He is best known for his analysis of the Indian caste system (Dumont 1980 [1966]), and especially for having been almost single-handedly responsible for popularising the concept of 'hierarchy' in the social sciences. His notion of value emerges directly out of his concept of hierarchy. Meaning, he argues, is fundamentally hierarchical, and since all social systems are essentially systems of meaning, they too are organised as total systems around key values. In such societies, whether a Hindu kingdom or Melanesian village, what we would consider material self-interest and the values attached to it are subordinated to larger, cosmological principles; it is only in market societies that this comes to be reversed. Let me explain the argument in greater detail.

Classical structuralism, according to Dumont, was developed as a technique to analyse the formal organisation of ideas. One always proceeds in more or less the same fashion, delimiting a field (whether a series of myths or a social system), identifying its elements, then mapping out the relations between them in terms of certain key conceptual oppositions (for example, raw vs. cooked, pure vs. impure, masculine vs. feminine, consanguinity vs. affinity). One then maps out the 'relations between the relations'; how these relate to one another. According to Dumont all this is very well and good, but what most structuralists fail to realise is that these ideas are always also 'values'. This is because, in any such pair of terms, one will be considered superior and will 'encompass' the inferior one. All hierarchical relations are based on some such notion of encompassment. One of Dumont's favourite illustrations is the opposition of right and left. Anthropologists have long noted a tendency, which apparently occurs in the vast majority of the world's cultures, for the right hand to be treated as somehow morally superior to the left. But, Dumont notes, this is because the right (side) always represents the right (moral). In

offering a handshake, Dumont notes, one must normally extend one hand or the other. The right hand put forward thus, in effect, represents one's person as a whole, including the left hand that is not extended (Dumont 1982; see Tcherkezoff 1983). Hence, at least in that context, the right hand 'encompasses' or 'includes' the left, which is also its opposite. (This is what he calls 'encompassing the contrary'.) This principle of hierarchy, he argues, applies to all significant binary oppositions.

Meaning thus arises from making conceptual distinctions that, in turn, are ranked and hence always contain an element of value. Even more important, the social contexts in which these distinctions are put into practice are also ranked. Societies are divided into a series of domains or levels, and higher ones encompass lower ones: they are more universal and thus have more value. In pretty much any society, for instance, domestic affairs, which relate to the interests of a small group of people, will be considered subordinate to political affairs, which represent the concerns of a larger, more inclusive community; and likely as not that political sphere will be considered subordinate to the religious or cosmological one, which represents the concerns of humanity as a whole. Perhaps the most innovative aspect of Dumont's theory is the way that the relations between different conceptual terms can be inverted on different levels. This can be illustrated with the Indian caste system. On the religious level, where Brahmans represent humanity as a whole before the gods, the operative principle is purity: all castes are ranked according to their purity, and by this standard Brahmans outrank even kings. In the subordinate, political sphere, in which humans relate only to other humans, power is the dominant value, and in that sphere kings are superior to Brahmans, who must do as they say. None the less, Brahmans are ultimately superior, because the sphere in which they are superior is the most encompassing. Running through Dumont's approach is the Saussurean notion that you have to understand a total system of meaning in order for any particular part of it to make sense. The first step in analysis is to identify some totality. The Dumontians call their project one of 'comparing wholes': by which they mean not so much symbolic systems, as societies taken as totalities structured around certain key 'ideas–values'.

Accordingly, Dumont's students have contributed a series of concrete analyses of societies in Africa, Melanesia, North Africa and the Indonesian archipelago (Barraud et al. 1994). Each begins by identifying a series of ranked values, which even at their simplest involve a division between the values that regulate exchange between human beings, and those which define human relations with the cosmos as a whole. For the Berbers of the Morroccan Rif, political and economic life centres on exchanges between prominent men locked in endless conflicts over honour; but ultimately honour is encompassed by the importance of *baraka*, or divine grace. As with the division between

purity and power in India, 'values' in Kluckhohn's sense are superior to those that organise the competitive games of political or economic self-interest, whether these be battles over prestige (as in gift economies) or struggles to control material wealth. The distinction corresponds almost exactly to St Augustine's distinction between 'objective' value, the intrinsic merit of a thing, its place in the cosmos, and value as interpreted through the faulty lens of human desire.

According to Dumont (1971), what makes contemporary Western society so unusual is that it inverts all this. Westerners no longer live in a hierarchical society, ranked into a series of ever-more inclusive domains. However, this is not because Westerners value equality (it is an item of faith for Dumontians that equality cannot, itself, be a value) but because for them, the supreme value has become the individual. Each person is assumed to be unique and thus, by definition, incomparable. If all individuals are values unto themselves (an idea which he traces back to Christian ideas about the value of the immortal soul), none can be treated as intrinsically superior to any other. It is this which has allowed the market, as the sphere of individual self-realisation, to become the hierarchically dominant, highest sphere, to which art, religion, science and politics are all increasingly subordinate.

Value as the meaning of actions

For a long time, Marxist anthropology did not have much to say about value (for one exception, see Taussig 1980). However, one of the most promising of the new approaches that began to emerge in the 1980s grew primarily out of Marx's insight that value ultimately measures the importance not of objects, but of actions. The two most important advocates of this new approach were Terence Turner (1979, 1984, 1987) and Nancy Munn (1986; her phenomenological approach does not derive directly from Marx, but draws on the same dialectical tradition). I have tried to develop their ideas in my own work (Graeber 2001). Let me end, then, with a brief outline of how an action-based value system might work.

Like Smith, Marx did not propose a labour theory of value mainly as a way to explain price fluctuations,[3] but as a way of connecting economic theory with broader moral and philosophical concerns. For Marx, 'labour' was more or less identical with human creativity: it is the way human beings exercise their imaginative powers to create their worlds, their social ties as well as their physical environments. The unique thing about capitalism, Marx held, was that it allowed labour to become an abstraction. This was because capitalism alone turns labour into a commodity, something that can be bought or sold, and what an employer who hires a labourer buys is an abstraction, that labourer's *capacity* to work. What makes this possible is the use of a specific symbolic medium of value: money. For Marx, money is a symbol. It

represents the 'value' or importance of labour. It can do so by incorporating it into a total market system, because for Marx the real value of a product is not (as Ricardo claimed) how many hours of work went into making it, but the proportion of the total amount of labour in the entire economy that went into making it. This proportion one can only determine through the market; that is, through the use of money. But even more, money is a symbol that brings into being the very thing that it symbolises: after all, wage labourers only go to work in order to get money. This is why, in Marx's terms, we can say that money is being 'fetishised'. Value is the way our actions take on meaning or importance by becoming incorporated into something larger than ourselves. But almost always, this can only happen through some kind of material medium, a token of value like money. Fetishism occurs when we assume that the value comes from the token, rather than ourselves.

In most known human societies there was no such market in labour; but still, one can say something similar happens. Different sorts of labour (perhaps better put: different forms of human creative activity) cluster together. They tend to get reflected back in the form of concrete, material media that are seen as valuable in themselves, and thus end up becoming the actual ends for which action takes place. Tokens of honour inspire honourable behaviour, tokens of piety inspire religious devotion, tokens of wisdom inspire learning and so on. Their value is just that of the actions they represent, but the actors see them as valuable in themselves. Usually, these tokens are unlike money, which is an abstract medium in which all tokens are effectively the same: any dollar bill is to all practical intents and purposes identical to any other. Instead, these tokens are unique, particular things: heirlooms, unique gestures, titles and so on. But this makes sense, too. After all, the same thing happens, to a lesser degree, in our own society. Recall my earlier remark about economic 'value' applying within the market, and a more particular sort of 'values' applying outside it. Abstract labour, the sort you get in the capitalist workplaces, ends up being materialised in abstract symbols; more concrete forms of labour end up being materialised in more concrete symbols. So housework and childcare, for which one is not paid, becomes a matter of 'family values' and is reflected in tokens of love and respect; work for the church becomes a matter of religious values, political activism is inspired by social values and so on. But even here, there is usually some sort of material token through which it all becomes real.

To schematise matters considerably (and readers interested in seeing any of this fleshed out are encouraged to consult Graeber 2001), allow me to suggest the following. First, value is the way actors represent the importance of their own actions to themselves as part of some larger whole (or 'concrete totality', as Marx liked to put it). Second, this importance is always seen in comparative terms. Some forms of value are seen as unique and incommensurable; others

are ranked (as in categories of *kula* valuables or the famous Tiv 'spheres of exchange'; see Strathern and Stewart chap. 14, and Isaac chap.1 supra); for yet others, such as money in market systems, value can be calculated precisely, so that one can know precisely how many of item A are equivalent to one item B. Third, importance is always realised through some kind of material token, and generally is realised somewhere other than the place it is primarily produced. For instance, in non-capitalist societies commonly there is a domestic sphere in which most of the primary work of people-creation takes place, and this is distinguished from a public, political sphere, in which the value generated by that work is realised, but usually in ways that exclude the women and younger people who do the bulk of the work.

Turner has tried to develop such ideas in a series of analyses of the Kayapo, of central Brazil. One of Turner's key points is that in non-capitalist societies the bulk of social labour is not so much directed at creating material objects as at shaping and reshaping human beings and the relations between them; the Kayapo see material production as a subordinate aspect of the reproduction of people. Hence Kayapo communities are organised as rings of households, surrounding a central, public, political space dominated by a plaza and adolescent men's houses. The households can be seen as the areas where the bulk of the creative work in raising and socialising children (and, for that matter, adults) takes place, through relations which themselves embody the two key Kayapo values: 'beauty' (a kind of total, integrative harmony) and a less articulated value that Turner variously calls 'power' or 'dominance'. These forms of value are ultimately *produced* in the domestic sphere. However, they are *realised* primarily in the central, public space, especially through certain forms of public performance, by elders who are themselves 'elders' only because they are the peak of a domestic process of creating and socialising people that takes place just offstage, and which is carried out primarily by people other than themselves.

This might seem to resemble the kind of terms a Dumontian might have discovered, but framing it this way emphasises that the process of realisation of value involves some form of public recognition. But this is not to say that people are simply battling over prestige; instead, the range of people who are willing to recognise certain forms of value constitutes the extent of what an actor considers a 'society' to consist of. There are any number of directions in which this kind of approach could be developed, though it remains to be seen whether it can resolve the endless paradoxes and moral dilemmas which have dogged the study of material exchange from Aristotle and Augustine onwards.

Conclusion

The study of value, then, invariably takes us beyond what we normally refer to as 'economics', for it leads us into moral, aesthetic and symbolic territory

that is very hard to reduce to rational calculation and science. In the Western tradition, economics began as a series of questions about the morality of value; it could only claim the status of a science by trying to exorcise value completely. Anthropologists, on the other hand, have tended to see their special expertise as lying in precisely the areas that economics abandoned. However, it appears that anthropologists have only tried to develop explicit theories of value when they find themselves in a crisis brought about by their inability to understand how flesh-and-blood individuals are motivated to maintain and re-create the abstract systems that anthropologists have always been so good at discerning. Since the failure of Kluckhohn's 'values project' in the 1950s, this has usually led anthropologists to work with some variation of economic models, or with linguistic models in the structuralist tradition of de Saussure. I have suggested that there are other possibilities, especially one that treats Marx's analysis of value as a symbolic analysis and looks at 'value' as a way people's own actions become meaningful to them, how they take on importance by becoming incorporated into some larger system of meaning. We can only wait to see which, if any, of these many strands of value theory are most useful in the future.

Notes

1. 'But this one standard which truly measures all things is demand … Articles are not valued according to the dignity of their nature, otherwise a mouse, an animal endowed with sense, should be of greater value than a pearl, a thing without life. But they are priced according as man stands in need of them for his own use' (*Sententia libri ethicorum* V, 9 cited in Langholm 1992: 229).
2. This is already very much implied by the notion that value was reflected in 'utility', which, after all, means not desirability but usefulness. That is, one values something for its ability to get one something else. What that something else is has already been pushed out of consideration. By the 1930s, with the 'ordinal revolution', economists discovered they could model consumer behaviour simply as a series of ranked preferences, which eliminated the need for even something as vague as utility.
3. In fact, one of the great problems for Marxist economists has always been figuring out precisely how the connection between values and prices is supposed to work, the famous 'transformation problem'.

References

Appadurai, A. 1986. Introduction. In *The social life of things* (ed.) A. Appadurai. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Barraud, C., D. de Coppet, A. Iteanu and R. Jamous 1994. *Of relations and the dead: four societies viewed from the angle of their exchanges*. (trans. S.J. Suffern). Oxford: Berg.

Caillé, A. 2000. *Anthropologie du don*. Paris: Éditions de Decouverte/MAUSS.

Douglas, M. and B. Isherwood 1979. *The world of goods*. London: Routledge.

Dumont, L. 1971. *From Mandeville to Marx*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Dumont, L. 1980 [1966]. *Homo hierarchichus*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Dumont, L. 1982. On value. *Proceedings of the British Academy* 66: 207–41.

Edmonson, M.S. 1973. The anthropology of values. In *Culture and life: essays in memory of Klyde Kluckhohn* (eds) W. Taylor, J. Eischer, E. Vogt. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

Evans-Pritchard, E.E. 1940. *The Nuer*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Fayazmanesh, S. 1998. The magical, mystical 'paradox of value'. *Research in the History of Economic Thought and Methodology* 16: 123–53.
Firth, R. 1964. The study of values by social anthropologists. In *Essays on social organization and values*. London: Athlone.
Graeber, D. 2001. *Toward an anthropological theory of value*. New York: Palgrave.
Kluckhohn, K. 1949. The philosophy of the Navaho Indian. In *Ideological differences and world order* (ed.) F.S.D. Northrop. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.
Kluckhohn, K. 1951a. Values and value-orientations in the theory of action: an exploration in definition and classification. In *Towards a general theory of action* (eds) T. Parsons and E. Shils. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
Kluckhohn, K. 1951b. A comparative study of values in five cultures. In *Navaho veterans, a study in changing values*, E.Z. Vogt (*Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology* 41: vii–ix.) Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University.
Kluckhohn, K. 1956. Towards a comparison of value-emphases in different cultures. In *The state of the social sciences* (ed.) L. White. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Langholm, O. 1992. *Economics in the medieval schools*. Leiden: E.J. Brill.
Miller, D. 1987. *Material culture and mass consumption*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
Miller, D. (ed.) 1995. *Acknowledging consumption*. London: Routledge.
Munn, N. 1986. *The fame of Gawa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Nuckolls, C.W. 1998. *Culture: a problem that cannot be solved*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
Sahlins, M. 1976. *Culture and practical reason*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Smith, A. 1776. *An enquiry concerning the wealth of nations.* http://www.adamsmith.org/smith/won-b1-c4.htm.
Strathern, M. 1987. Conclusion. In *Dealing with inequality: analysing gender relations in Melanesia and beyond* (ed.) M. Strathern. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Strathern, M. 1988. *The gender of the gift*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Strathern, M. 1992. Qualified value: the perspective of gift exchange. In *Barter, exchange and value* (eds) C. Humphrey and S. Hugh-Jones. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Taussig, M. 1980. *The devil and commodity fetishism in South America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
Tcherkezoff, S. 1983. *Le Roi Nyamwezi, la droite et la gauche. Révision comparative des classifications dualistes*. Paris: Atelier d'Anthropologie Sociale, Maison des Sciences de l'Homme. (Published in English as *Dual classification reconsidered: Nyamwezi sacred kingship and other examples*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1987.)
Thomas, N. 1991. *Entangled objects*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
Turner, T. 1979. Anthropology and the politics of indigenous peoples' struggles. *Cambridge Anthropology* 5: 1–43.
Turner, T. 1984. Value, production and exploitation in non-capitalist societies. To appear in *Critique of pure culture*. New York: Berg [forthcoming].
Turner, T. 1987. The Kayapo of southeastern Para. MS.
Vogt, E.Z. and E.M. Albert (eds) 1966. *The people of Rimrock: a study of values in five cultures*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

28 Value: economic valuations and environmental policy

Catherine Alexander

If the last chapter took us out of the market-dominated sphere to hunt for notions of value in other cultures, then this chapter takes us right back in. Here, we ask some familiar anthropological questions in an unfamiliar setting, that of policy making.[1] The aim is to show that bureaucrats and institutions in the developed North (and indeed those in the South who come under their sway) are also bound up in their own cosmologies that determine ideas of value. That is, bureaucratic ways of understanding, evaluating and acting on the world[2] are framed by neoclassical, market-based assumptions that, on investigation, present a distinctly partial view of what is actually going on. In place of human diversity there is uniformity; in place of qualitative changes as groups become larger there is the assumption that scale can be accounted for by simple aggregation and disaggregation.[3] Most astonishing is the privileging of economic transactions to the extent that the economic sphere not only appears to be autonomous, but also is frequently portrayed as subsuming social life and sometimes even the environment. Daniel Miller (1998: 187–216) suggests that the effect of using this representation or model in policy making is often to force the real into the straitjacket of the virtual.

In order to highlight just how encompassing economic assumptions and methods of identifying value have become, I track them first through an ethnography of a day devoted to showcasing recycling projects and, second, through an analysis of different methods used to select optimum environmental policies. I have two reasons for choosing this material as a vehicle to explore the pervasiveness and effects of neoclassical economic thinking. First, there is generally a keen awareness among practitioners in this field that they are dealing with a multiplicity of concerns and values intersecting with, but also ranging considerably beyond, the understanding of value in the economic sense touched on in the previous chapter. Not only is the price for which pig-iron can be sold taken into account, but also values attaching to the environment and to society. The latter is a particularly troublesome variable, muddying the reductive elegance of equations mapping interactions between the more pliable categories of 'economy' and 'environment'. What is of particular interest is how all these larger matters, traditionally external to microeconomic concerns, are internalised and brought within the domain of a bounded economy.

The second reason for analysing common methods for valuing and selecting environmental (particularly waste) strategies is that wastes are the classic negative externality of economics (see, for example, Callon 1998), the byproduct of a given activity that adversely affects parties beyond the immediate transacting frame. The field here is rich in both material and metaphorical transformations within and between various aesthetics of waste and value (see Thompson 1979). It is hard enough to characterise waste satisfactorily – Graedel and Allenby (1995: 83) suggest at least five definitions used by different legal entities – but as the incarnation of value's opposite number, its objective co-relative, waste also serves to emphasise that both are highly mobile[4] and indeed mobilising categories.[5] One way of tackling negative externalities is to force the producer through legislation to account and be responsible for them. This chapter is about the implications of bringing the environment and society into a balance sheet.

In addition to including ideas of society and the environment into economic equations, attempts to value the environment shift timeframes dramatically. Conventionally, profit-based transactions are driven by a ten- to fifteen-year span. But, typically, accounting for the environment highlights the need to recognise, 'inter- and intratemporal equity' (Seroa da Motta 2001: 1) if there are to be adequate global resources for the next generation to live to the same standard as the present (otherwise denoted by the shorthand tag, 'sustainability'). In other words, it is not enough to think about allocating resources fairly between North and South (intratemporal equity), one must also consider the needs of future generations alongside the present (intertemporal equity). Originating in forestry, where it simply meant ensuring sufficient trees were planted to replace those logged, 'sustainability' was fleshed out by the 1987 Brundtland report[6] to become the *sine qua non* of new product placements, policy making and research grant applications, yoking together a dizzying array of academic disciplines, public and private domains and jurisdictions. 'Sustainability' has become a potent but empty rallying cry, laden with positive value but so variable in content that it is almost devoid of meaning, other than being a Good Thing. Origins, however, will out. In practice, sustainable development is often more heavily weighted towards environmental preservation, and is less than clear on what is meant by 'society'.[7]

Oddly enough, as the following sections illustrate, many wishing to reveal the environmental inequities inherent in transactions driven solely by short-term, profit-based aims, still try to counter theories of pure neoliberal economics by using exactly the same premises (see, for example, Barde and Pearce 1991; Pearce and Markandya 1989); the core axioms of market economics remain inviolate and unchallenged (Foster 2002: 26–7; Jacobs 1994).[8] As an example, the introduction to *Environmental economics and*

policy making in developing countries (Seroa da Motta 2001: 5) states: 'ecological values can be estimated with economic valuation methods which rely on the same theoretical background as microeconomics'. Other than the abrupt change from a microeconomic focus on a firm's activities to encompass the world, the faith in predictable models is right in line with the belief that the market is a self-regulating mechanism.

The next section is a brief case study where market assumptions were used to select recycling schemes for funding; those, in other words, that demonstrated value for money.[9] I then pursue themes arising from this case through an examination of some common methods used to evaluate potential policies that have effects across several domains. Both sections show the unintended effects of applying one form of rationality to a multitude of concerns, contexts and scales. Often, the result is the very opposite of the intention.

A short case study: London Recycling Day

In the summer of 2003, a Recycling Day was held in London's City Hall to present a series of projects under way in some of the administrative subdistricts (boroughs) of London. The impetus was the series of impending targets set by the European Union (EU) for recycling wastes (the first to be operational by 2005), targets that Britain was far from being likely to meet, particularly in urban areas. Approximately £21 million had been granted by the government, matched with funding from industrial partnerships. Over the previous year, London boroughs had been invited to submit proposals for local schemes, which were then evaluated and compared according to both the fund's own set of priorities, adapted from those created by the Department of the Environment, and value added to local communities. Those projects that met the competitive criteria most successfully were awarded funds to start work. Thus a streamlined process was set in motion for establishing the best investment of public funds in partnership with the private sector. This was the theory; but in the interstices of the day's official presentations, a number of other concerns floated to the surface.

The 'waste hierarchy', a preferential ranking of measures to deal with wastes, begins with waste prevention and minimisation, embracing consumption reduction, designing products to ensure minimal end-of-life waste and targeting producers in the hope that they will internalise responsibility for product residues. The next ranks move through various options for recovering value (of any definition) from resources after primary use, such as reuse, recycling, incineration (energy from waste) and finally landfilling (which salvages almost nothing of value). Each of these transformatory options may in turn produce yet another layer of byproducts. These then are the descending levels of preference for waste management, after all it costs less to have no or little waste in the first place than to find options for dealing with it later.

Yet, in the allocation of money to support these projects tackling urban waste management, minimisation and local, informal initiatives were given the lowest priorities. The highest priority and funding went to those schemes where clear baselines, improvement targets and outcomes could be established: it is easier to count tons of collected glass than to account for waste reduction at source. Visibility, in other words, seemed to drive the selection of projects, not the more logical sequence of the waste hierarchy. Consumption reduction also conflicts awkwardly with other political goals for a constant growth economy, another foundational construct of sustainability.[10]

Competition, a central tenet of market efficiency, was the means of selecting the best projects to fund, so that only the leanest schemes, offering the most benefit for the least cost, would get through. There were several comments, however, from local officials that, lacking experience in writing proposals, considerable time was consumed in planning and redrafting submissions to present their knowledge in the right format, especially as several staff left during the tendering process and new recruits had to start again from scratch. In effect, the wheel was designed many times in parallel across the boroughs and, as in any competition, many proposals remained unfunded. The transaction costs for each borough in preparing the proposals were considerable; they may not have appeared on the recycling fund's balance sheet, but were certainly charged to another public account.[11] This is the problem with extrapolating from microeconomic principles: sight is lost of larger- or smaller-scale effects, whether costs or benefits.

Other comments revealed a related unaccounted transaction cost. Turnover rates are extremely high among local government waste officials: some move to other boroughs; some become private consultants, usually taking with them their informal network of colleagues and ways of doing things. Consequently, much time is spent by new staff re-forging networks and learning how things work. As an efficient production of optimum results, the competitive process works as long as efficiency is only judged at one scale. Slip a scale down and the picture is one that is neither effective nor efficient, but actually produces waste.

The high premium that economics traditionally places on competition as the best way of achieving low-cost, high-quality products in a short timeframe discounts the benefits brought by operating to a longer timescale and sharing knowledge. This suggests that what may work to secure profit maximisation is inappropriate in a public sector with different goals, timeframes and obligations. Introducing an 'internal market' fundamentally changes the constitution of an entity, whether it is a city or a government administration. Suddenly components (whether departments, boroughs or counties) become semi-autonomous, are valued as if they are independent operations and are

placed in conditions of rivalry. It is exactly as if one part of a body were hostile to another.

The final two observations from the Recycling Day also point to the emphasis on accounting for the visible, and the tendency to slip between micro- and macro-levels of concern, and indeed logic, without recognising qualitative differences. Many speeches spoke of the intention to make London sustainable, 'not one widget will come into London', went one speech, 'that will not be re-used a hundred times'. Another speaker envisaged a future London as a self-sufficient island in response to a comment from the floor that Britain's largest metropolis consumed more and produced more waste than other areas of the country. These comments were belied by a number of discrepancies. Although the day was for recycling, not one project examined direct re-use of an object. In other words, each scheme placed a different weighting on specific parts of an object's route out of the domestic space – some on collection or, in a few cases, sorting and compacting some types of wastes, but none considered the reinsertion of the waste object into any regime of value, financial or otherwise. Nor were the various possible trajectories of objects evaluated from the moment they left the domestic space to (for example) sale to paper merchants. Thus, comparison of options was difficult as the emphasis and available data shifted. Recycling was largely left as a potential direction, but the loop remained unclosed. Only once was the final leg of the transformation made explicit. One borough had jointly built a municipal recycling facility (MRF) with an industrial partner who pointed out the advantage of public and private sectors joining forces since, through his company, global markets were available for selling compacted wastes produced by the MRF. Suddenly, the boundaries of sustainable London became a little more porous.

The Recycling Day illustrates a number of topics that disturb an easy confidence not only in the impartiality of market processes designed to optimise value, but also in their rationality and internal coherence. First, competition as an efficient means of achieving the best price for consumers often just relocates the costs to another level of (dis)aggregation. Following from this point, visibility and scale are both key. Efficiency can only be shown if it is visible and measurable. As a result, quantifiable elements are stressed, even when this contradicts preferences produced from a different logic. Thus there is an emphasis on recycling and waste disposal options rather than minimisation schemes. Objective evaluation depends on comparison of like with like, but the items that are costed and the bounds of the exercise often depend on the agenda driving them. Identifying efficiency is again a consequence of the scale of analysis. Transaction costs above or below the frame of concern 'disappear', to be displaced to another account or relocated beyond the actor's immediate realm of responsibility. Global markets for

disposing of wastes also serve to gloss the transfer of the North's wastes to the South.

Methods of valuing the environment

This section re-examines these matters through an exploration of commonly-used instruments to estimate the worth or value of an activity or product: cost–benefit analysis (CBA), triple bottom line (3BL) assessment, and life-cycle analyses or studies (LCAs). Having considered the history, purposes and problems attached to each, I then look at the implicit assumptions underlying such calculations and their consequences. The political importance attached to neoclassical models of economic motivation 'has been placed solely on our future – historical investigation of the market has not had anywhere near such importance placed upon it' (Muldrew 1998: 11). Together with history, an anthropological perspective on the open-ended formation of culture, economy and history (see Granovetter 1985: 486) might help to show that alternative modes of thinking and acting are possible.

Cost–benefit analysis

Cost–benefit analysis is perhaps the best known means of assessing the impact of a process or product. At its simplest, CBA takes a proposed or existing situation or regulation and then identifies and costs all associated negative and positive effects. These effects may be tangible ('hard'), such as increased annual production of pig-iron by 5000 tons, or intangible ('soft'), such as a jollier workforce after the installation of a coffee machine. The analysis is completed by a comparison of the respective values of costs and benefits and the production of a single bottom line: the balance. It is a devastatingly effective tool to gauge the desirability of different courses of action precisely because it appears to be so simple and transparent. The problems are legion.

Fundamental to CBA is the faith that everything is convertible to money; in other words, that everything can be commoditised. Several points follow from this assertion. First, some consequences of a given action may not be easily rendered into money terms, such as happiness or increased fear of crime. Of course, with actuarial assistance a price can be deduced for almost anything, usually by tracking an action's effects until they are eventually transformed into something quantifiable. A happy workforce, such an argument might run, will result in increased productivity for the same level of wages. Thus, the benefit of a coffee machine may be costed as improved profit margins. How far such a costing is meaningful is debatable. By using money as a universal means of equivalence, the incomparable and inalienable (an early morning panorama over the South Downs of Sussex for example) is meaninglessly reduced to so many vending machines. In her careful exploration of the history of life insurance in Britain and America, Zelizer (1985) tracks the changes in

the often contested and conflicting economic, social and moral values placed on children, showing the high mobility of values not only through time but also between different personal, moral and financial registers. Doing so, she shows the slippage from the streamlined, liberal model of an autonomous market to the lived complexity where, 'all markets are sets of social relations that involve consumption, production and exchange under a variety of social settings' (1994: xi).

The other key supposition that needs to be questioned is whether money is indeed the levelling instrument of universal equivalence it is usually assumed to be (for example, Simmel 1990). There is a long tradition of the moral repugnance produced by the artifice of joining unlike to unlike through money. Yet Zelizer (1989, 1994) shows that, in use, supposedly universal currencies are in fact often carefully earmarked for different purposes, though her analysis revolves around the allocation of household savings for specific expenditures, managing the moral and social boundaries between domestic and beyond the home. Money from immoral sources is kept away from church donations, other monies are saved in labelled tins for children's clothes, treats, milk, insurance and so forth. Zelizer's prime target is the supposed neutrality of general-purpose money (Dalton 1965), although there is a wealth of anthropological literature (for example, Bloch and Parry 1989; Bohannan and Bohannan 1968; Hart 1986; Malinowski 2002 [1922]) itemising the separation of different transacting spheres through special-purpose monies that keep items of incommensurable moral value distinct.

Central to this discussion too is the identification of costs, benefits and recipients: who gets to choose? Who speaks on whose behalf? MacLennan (1997) follows the regulatory acts in the United States to control pollution. Her conclusion, following Eads and Fixe (1984), is that CBA in the policy sphere almost inevitably results in favouring business, to the cost of both citizens and the public sphere of governance. By resorting to justification of policy through the supposed objectivity of CBA, democracy is weakened: there is simply no room for human judgement. But the objectivity of CBA is questioned by considering the degree of arbitrariness in selecting *what* is chosen to be costed, *how* costs are attributed and allocated and *where* the analyst ceases to include knock-on effects and so on. At best it is indicative, at worst it undermines democracy.

Increasingly, remedies are sought for the deficiencies of CBA. In response to environmentalists' cries that the natural world was unvalued, one woefully ironic solution has been to include 'nature' as an element in the balance sheet of CBA (Foster 2002: 26). Thus, in one stroke, the environment is broken into manageable chunks (climate, rivers, forests, livestock), commoditised and internalised within the economic sphere: the priceless can now be converted into pig-iron and vending machines.

Barde and Pearce (1991), for example, itemise six case studies where, it is argued, costs *can* be placed upon the environment through such ingenious ploys as 'the public's' willingness to pay (WTP) for preserving their surroundings. Erased from the picture is the fact that this public is composed of an infinite variety of people with different financial capacities and disparate demands upon their household resources. The 'willingness' in WTP is only useful for a public comprising identical economic men busily calculating and comparing every action and sensation for immediate maximum payoff. Citing the example of the decision not to construct a tunnel costing £92 million for the Southampton–Portsmouth M3 motorway extension, their conclusion is that this area of outstanding beauty can be valued at less than £92 million. Necessarily, in drawing such a clear conclusion, the opportunity costs of such a tunnel (more hospitals for example, or better-paid workers) are not examined, nor are changing values over time.

Unlike Barde and Pearce, Lanigan (1993: 2–3) does tackle opportunity costs in discussing the uses of CBA for air pollution. In an unusually careful study, she points to the high degree of uncertainty that must be (but is rarely) acknowledged, the frequent lack of adequate data (especially where data extrapolated from developed countries are used for the South) and the tendency to privilege richer states. These uncertainties and biases are apparent in, for instance, the selection of the timeframe within which costs are estimated, which has a marked effect on the final result, particularly when long-term investments are involved. Lanigan's point about uncertainty is multiplied: not just timeframes but, as Cole (2002: 89) notes, discount rates are also inevitably subjective.

People are usually absent from CBA other than as an invented collective: local communities given commonality through proximity (see Amin and Thrift 2002: 41–7), or 'society' as a group of people supposedly sharing a culture. Just like the environment, people or indeed 'culture' have to be made visible and internalised in order to be made manifest on the balance sheet of CBA. Without this process of internalisation, a consequence of the thought experiment that is a totalising economy (Granovetter 1985), people are blanked out of the equation. In effect it is a continuation of Wolf's (1982) thesis of the excluded: either you are erased from consideration or you are purportedly represented by an abstract aggregate that someone else has created, damned if you're in the balance sheet and damned if you're not. CBA cannot cope with very much reality and, as Lanigan (1993: 14) points out, if applied to large-scale situations, 'can involve simplification to the point of inanity'. MacLennan (1997) also points to the problematic position of people in CBA, noting that private-sector interests are given primacy over the stake of the public sector in the shape of government but that, in this formulation, the private sector equates to business. It is easy to forget the multiplicity of

incompatible public–private pairings (see Warner 2002: 29) which makes it logically impossible to scoop together meanings accruing to either side of the dichotomy. For example, members of the public may emerge from their domestic space to engage in a market transaction where their consumer rights are protected by legislation created by a democratic government.

The final problem with CBA is one that pervades any form of impact assessment: what is to be included? As Dalton (1959) illustrates in his study of management and audit processes, the selection of items to be costed is at best arbitrary, veering at the other end of the scale to the highly political (see also P. Miller 1998: 174–93). Granovetter's (1985) discussion of Dalton's study emphasises that social relations and market institutions are far from independent of each other (see also Alexander 2001). My study of costing sugar production in Turkey (Alexander 2002) showed that a great range in results was possible, largely determined by who was doing the costing to what ends and by what was selected for inclusion. On pure cost terms, the Turkish treasury claimed that it was cheaper to import sugar than to produce it domestically with all the attendant subsidies. However, a closer knowledge of the agro-industry, plus a more expansive approach to the ripple effects of production, disclosed considerable benefits to local farmers from the byproducts of sugar production: green fodder for their animals over the summer; beet pulp for feed over the winter. Additionally, the sugar factories provided employment in areas where farming was difficult due to harsh climates and fear of terrorism, and where there was little opportunity for industry to flourish. Potential political leverage was also significant if rent-seeking activities are included: factories served as channels for subsidies, considerably inflated before elections, and as sources of employment they could be partly translated into votes. However, the treasury, conducting a straightforward comparison between expenditure and income, did not count these additional, longer-term values. Just as it can be difficult to identify the beginning and end of relationships that exist through and beyond market relations, so bounding the beginning and end of a cost–benefit exercise can be contentious.

Triple bottom line (3BL) assessments

Although cost–benefit analyses continue to be popular and used in both small, relatively circumscribed cases and macro-scale situations, recognition of the difficulties in reducing everything to financial cost has resulted in an increasing emphasis on 3BL assessments. Borrowing from the ideas of sustainable development with its three 'pillars' (social, economic and environmental), 3BL assessments acknowledge that these three domains are essentially incommensurate. In other words, the reasoning goes, since a clod of environment cannot sensibly be exchanged for a nugget of society, an

evaluation of a proposal's impact must be positive in each realm. Thus, a potential environmental disaster cannot be offset by increased employment or educational provision; evidence of short-term profit should not be allowed to compensate for irreversible natural degradation or human suffering. Corporations and governments should focus on added value (and costs) in all three areas. All well and good, but the challenge remains to translate intention into routine practice.

Elkington's (1997) analysis of 3BL, *Cannibals with forks*, suggests that although the primary consideration of business is profit, increasing consumer pressure will force corporate capitalism (the cannibals in question) to address questions of social justice and environmental quality (the three-pronged fork of the title). Corporate enthusiasm is not likely, and a realistic expectation is that 'triple bottom line is used as a framework for measuring and reporting corporate performance against economic, social and environmental parameters'.[12] In other words, 3BL can help to make some processes visible but, as the saying goes, weighing the turkey will not make it fatter. Declarations of environmental and social concerns are useful as a sugar coating to flatter ethical investors and thus can be shown to enhance shareholder value. Ultimately, left to self-regulation, business often continues to ransack the natural world for finite, primary resources.

The next question is the extent to which the 3BL method is logically consistent with the accounting paradigms from which it has been extrapolated. Double-entry bookkeeping is central to modern accounting. It is a system of logging business dealings, which emerged in Italy in the fourteenth century and brought an unprecedented level of accuracy to assessments of a firm's financial position. Previously, all transactions had been written down chronologically so that the purchase of a merchant's cargo of silk might be recorded one day, and monies received for the sale of rare spices might be entered the next. Double-entry accounting changed this radically by seeing any movement of money as having (at least) a dual effect: debiting one account and crediting another. The benefits are threefold: recording each transaction twice reduces inaccuracies; the exact state of any account at any time can be readily seen in terms of profit or debt; the intensity of interactions between particular accounts is made more visible. There is still one overall balance for the firm, but its internal flow of cash is now also discernible. For Goody (1989) and other analysts of the effects of literacy on social organisation, the advent of double-entry bookkeeping was an imaginative leap from approximation to the precise, mechanical, predictable representation of a Newtonian universe.

Since 3BL assessments borrow from accounting metaphors it seems logical to assume that each bottom line is representing the equivalent of a business or, at any rate, a bounded entity with internal movement of profit (or goods) and

debt (or bads). In fact, however, several moves are happening with 3BL. On the one hand, the three spheres of environment, economy and society are theoretically recognised in their own right without recourse to analogical representation, and without being encompassed by one overarching category, that may in fact be inimical to the elements it harbours. On the other hand, there remains the sense that at some level translation *is* possible between these three. After all, each is often referred to as 'capital', which commonly stands for transformable 'resources'.[13] What we have, then, is the conceit that these domains are unique and incommensurable and, at the same time, interactions between 'accounts' can be logged and registered on each bottom line. Thus the logic of double-entry bookkeeping both operates within each sphere *and* encompasses all three.

There are several ways of showing the three areas, but I focus here on one common graphical representation of the relationship between these areas in 3BL. The environmental balance is drawn at the bottom, the line for the economy appears in the middle, while 'society' hovers above the other two. The reasoning is simple; at the same time, a curious conflation of economic theories and hierarchies is suggested. In such a form, the natural world is the source of all value, without which neither economy nor society can exist. If it is the beginning then it is also, in the sense of having finite reserves, the end. It is the ultimate bottom line. The second line, 'the economy', is shown separately from the environment and society, yet is dependent on the former and supports the latter, mediating between the two and converting latent value into tradable assets. Society itself thus becomes the hybrid result of transformation: it is just another value drawn from the earth. For an abstract thought experiment, this second line is staggeringly autonomous and creative. After all, as Max Weber noted, economic action is only a special, if important, form of social action (quoted in Granovetter 1985: 481). This is the most striking premise on which all these methods of valuation are founded: that the economy can exist entirely detached from social forms.

The third line is 'society', almost shown as a superstructure that is produced by, or at any rate dependent upon, the economy and far removed from the base. It is far from clear what this line represents; all too frequently it is nothing more than a capacious carpet bag for the awkwardly immeasurable leftover elements, 'social things'. Putnam's (2000) definition of human capital as labour resources with associated skills and loyalty, as distinct from social or 'societal' capital as infrastructural services such as education, hospitals and transport, has been seized upon by economists and the developmental sphere alike. Sufficient ambiguity remains for these terms to be rallying cries for both the World Bank and jurisdictions of entirely different hues;[14] the common ground is that framing society in this way effectively translates it into just another input into economic processes. I have concentrated on unpicking the

implications of depicting the three bottom lines as a hierarchy because it illustrates most clearly the institutionalisation of the economy as an independent entity. Other forms of representation may show the three lines stacked side by side or as a maze of bi-directional flows. In each case, golem-like, 'the economy' is shown as independent.

Although hard to quantify, the environment can at least be seen out of one's window. But for all that 'society' and 'economy' seem, in 3BL analyses, to be as open to examination and manipulation as the object of a scientific study, they are less apparent in themselves than in their effects or their interactions with each other or the natural world. Thus ecological tax reform, fair trade and environmental refugee issues are all the results of connections or clashes between two or more of these bottom lines: the assumption behind ecological taxation, for example, is that such financial instruments will have multiple effects in all three domains. If the implication is that *none* of these areas is wholly autonomous, then the challenge is to find a way of analysing complexity without rendering it down to monolithic regimes of value that would obscure the connections among events that result from policy decisions.

Life-cycle studies and other impact assessments

The last method of valuation explored here is life-cycle analysis, a relatively recent form of assessing the total effect of a given product or action (Jönson 1996; SustainAbility 1993). In essence, it attempts to examine all effects on the environment of producing (and sometimes consuming) a product, from cradle to grave. Another popular use is as a tool to decide optimal environmental strategies by comparing options. Once again, the emphasis is on quantification. Thus, an LCA might seek to quantify the energy and raw materials that go into producing an object and the various forms of waste that are generated at each stage of the object's life. Second-generation costs, such as for making the factory equipment used to produce an item or for the educational system that produces a skilled workforce, are usually excluded from the study. Even so, a key problem is identifying both cradle and grave, especially where goods have the potential to be recycled, even if realising that potential is not automatic. Where death has lost its sting, it can be rather hard to pinpoint the end.

The difficulty of comparing the whole-life effects of one product against another to any meaningful degree slightly reduces the usefulness of LCA as a comparative tool. Indeed LCA studies are often commissioned by manufacturers to 'prove' that their product is more eco-friendly than another, suggesting the convenient flexibility of LCA. If the requisite data can be gathered and manipulated, LCA is indeed a powerful diagnostic instrument, but demands are high on setting clear boundaries and processing vast amounts of data. Thus assessing landfilling wastes requires, at least, an understanding

of transportation costs (for example, road maintenance, fuel use, capital depreciation of vehicles) together with possible air and groundwater pollution in order to compare this disposal option with waste incineration.

As with CBA and 3BL, the initial inventory of elements (the life-cycle inventory or LCI) to be included is ultimately down to the discretion of the analyst. 'Streamlined' LCAs focus on different elements, but such weightings may also anticipate the outcome, as might LCAs in support of single-issue policies. Again, data interpretation entails a series of value judgements. For example, pollutants of varying toxicity may require comparison, a feat rendered harder if a highly-toxic pollutant (for example, sulphur) appears in smaller quantities than one that is less toxic. Toxicity itself is a relative term, and is context- or object-dependent. Use of non-renewable resources such as fuels may have to be compared with the costs of producing recyclable items or deploying renewable resources (for example, softwoods) for paper. The difficulty is compounded by the fact that combinations of environmental impacts may be more, or indeed less, than the sum of their parts (a point often forgotten with Environmental Impact Assessments as well). Recalling Lanigan's phrase about oversimplification, simple aggregation of a series of quantified impacts may be extremely dubious.

The hopes that LCAs might enable incontrovertible decisions to be made have largely been discredited, although this has not dampened the enthusiasm of practitioners. Social and economic effects are rarely included, and one response is to refine LCAs by 'adding in' a bit of society. In the main they are most useful, like all forms of assessment, when employed to make information available to decision makers. The temptation, as with all forms of quantifiable assessment, is to attenuate the role of human judgement and to rely on what appears to be objectivity, the result of good science.

Conclusion

Traditionally, economic anthropology has focused on the interactions and links between the economic side of life and other realms such as kinship, politics or ideology. The other characteristic of anthropology is to study the diversity of experiences and values within both the lives of individuals and the groups to which they belong. Constant negotiation between conflicting norms, preferences and expectations is accepted as part of most people's lives as they move between different groups and settings (for example, workplace, kin, neighbourhood, country and so on), changing their situation and position *vis-à-vis* other individuals. As a consequence, anthropology tends to be sceptical of attempts to treat 'the economy' as self-contained and self-regulating with its own laws and mechanisms.

From what I have said in this chapter, it should be clear how tenacious is this notion of the mechanical economy and how its core assumptions pervade

other spheres of policy making. The emphasis on the visible and quantifiable, the erosion of variability in place of standardisation, the tendency to aggregate across qualitatively different scales are all apparent in the examples I have given, but are also typical of neoclassical economics as a whole.[15] And as this chapter shows, well-meaning attempts to recognise the value of the environment frequently fall back on the technique of reduction and quantification. Analogy to money as a means of equivalence further distorts and distances the essential qualities of the entity under observation.

Bringing an anthropological eye to these instances of economic valuation suggests a nice paradox. From one perspective, contingency, heterogeneity and ingenuity are all reduced to regular units and predictable processes. However, closer inspection often shows that precise methods of accounting and prediction are in fact fairly arbitrary. Measurements of value depend upon what is chosen to be made visible, who chooses and how it is measured. Definitions are slippery, and one process, product or activity can be represented entirely differently according to where finitude is drawn and what is deemed to constitute its primary characteristics.

This chapter has outlined some of the contradictions and consequences inherent in market-based thinking running rampant across public spheres and discrete moral domains, and being accorded an objective truth above the imperfect mode of democratic governance. Writing about 'the limited utility of economic analysis for environmental protection' (Cole 2002: 132), the economist J.H. Dales (1968: 39–40) observed: '[T]he economist is quite unable to draw up a table showing all benefits and costs of all anti-pollution policies … that might be proposed; he is therefore quite unable to say that one policy is demonstrably superior to all others'. His conclusion (1968: 77; emphasis added) is that whether pollution problems are considered as an economic exercise (CBA) or more properly in the legal realm (property rights), 'any anti-pollution policy is … bound to be *in the nature of a social experiment*'. Yet the assumption that market behaviour (individuating, maximising transactions between autonomous agents) is essential and pervasive now goes much further than early advocates of liberalism ever thought possible. Market values have invaded the public sphere of governance, quantified the ineffable and made uncertainty a greater sin than reliance on human judgement.

Acknowledgement

I thank Keith Hart and Sonia Heaven for their advice and helpful comments.

Notes

1. A related topic, not explored here, is the increasing application of economic instruments in order to regulate behaviour and achieve targeted policy outcomes.
2. 'The bureaucrat has the world as the mere object of his action' (Marx 1970: 48).

3. Galbraith (1987: 40) notes that this 'fallacy of composition' is a common error.
4. Note that 'value' can imply variously moral worth, a price and what a thing is. The last two senses are interdependent; if there are different definitions of what constitutes an object, establishing its price is almost impossible (see Alexander 2004: 137–70).
5. See, for example, Eeva Berglund's (1997) discussion of German activists grouping around environmental single issues such as the dumping of hazardous wastes.
6. In 1983, the UN established a commission chaired by Gro Harlem Brundtland, the Norwegian prime minister, to make recommendations for global change. The commonly cited definition of sustainability in the resulting report, usually known as the Brundtland Report, is: 'meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs' (World Commission for Environment and Development 1987: 43).
7. 'Society' is often rendered as 'users' and 'stakeholders'. The latter tend to represent business interests.
8. Foster (2002: 41n1) also makes the point that environmental economists tend to practise within the neoclassical framework, adapting it but essentially upholding its strictures and institutions. Ecological economists, by contrast, following Georgescu-Roegen (1971), emphasise the effects of entropy and the consequent need for a fundamental change in core institutions. Although attention has been paid, most notably by McCloskey (1993), to the rhetorical ploys of neoclassical economics, less observation has been accorded to the transdomain metaphors through which sociologists, economists and engineers alike construct their disciplinary worlds. Economic entropy is a metaphor.
9. Recognising that lowest cost does not always equate to best value in a wider sense, in the 1990s the British government began, nominally, to emphasise 'VFM' (value for money). The problem remained, however, as to how to identify VFM.
10. Stephen Viederman (1996) proposed that five capitals and three pillars underlie sustainable development. The capitals are: human, constructed, natural, social and cultural; the pillars are the environment, the economy and community. Much of the literature on sustainability makes reference to the ideas of pillars and capitals, although there is little consistency. What is of interest in this chapter is the separation out of 'economy' that is followed through in the evaluation exercises discussed later in the chapter.
11. In many cases the need to meet impending legislative targets on waste has resulted in cutting other areas of local budgets, most commonly road maintenance. Ironically, a sound transport infrastructure is key to successful urban waste management.
12. SustainAbility website – www.sustainability.com.
13. For example, Pierre Bourdieu's (1977) discussion of economic, cultural and social capitals all of which can be exchanged for – or recognised as – symbolic capital or power.
14. My thanks to James Johnston for suggesting the usefulness of Bruno Latour's idea of ambiguity in this respect.
15. In an extreme form, the classic characteristics of 'economic man' are maximisation of short-term gain, autonomy, free agency and complete knowledge. As the essays in Ferber and Nelson's (1993) *Beyond economic man* show, there is also an assumption that the person in question is male, albeit of a rather particular type: 'a cross between Rambo and an investment banker' (McCloskey 1993: 79). As for the type of economics discussed in this chapter, 'the neoclassicals are notably butch. They are a motorcycle gang among economists, strutting about the camp with clattering matrices and rigorously fixed points, sheathed in leather, repelling affection' (1993: 77).

References

Alexander, C. 2001. Legal and binding: time, change and long-term transactions. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 7 (n.s.): 467–85.

Alexander, C. 2002. *Personal states: making connections between bureaucracy and people*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Alexander, C. 2004. Value, relations and changing bodies: privatization and property rights in

Kazakhstan. In *Property in question: appropriation, recognition and value transformation in the global economy* (eds) K. Verdery and C. Humphrey. Oxford: Berg.
Amin, A. and N. Thrift 2002. *Cities: reimagining the urban*. Cambridge: Polity.
Barde, J.-P. and D. Pearce 1991. *Valuing the environment: six case studies*. London: Earthscan.
Berglund, E. 1997. *Knowing nature, knowing science: an ethnography of local environmental activism*. Cambridge: White Horse Press.
Bloch, M. and J. Parry (eds) 1989. *Money and the morality of exchange*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Bohannan, P. and L. Bohannan 1968. *Tiv economy*. London: Longman.
Bourdieu, P. 1977. *Outline of a theory of practice.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Callon, M. (ed.) 1998. *The laws of the market*. Oxford: Blackwell.
Cole, D. 2002. *Pollution and property: comparing ownership institutions for environmental protection*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Dales, J.H. 1968. *Pollution, property and prices: an essay in policy-making and economics*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
Dalton, G. 1965. Primitive money. *American Anthropologist* 67: 44–65.
Dalton, M. 1959. *Men who manage: fusions of feelings and theory in administration*. New York: Wiley.
Eads, G. and M. Fixe 1984. *Relief or reform: Reagan's regulatory dilemma*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press.
Elkington, J. 1997. *Cannibals with forks: the triple bottom line of 21st-century business*. Oxford: Capstone.
Ferber, M. and J. Nelson (eds) 1993. *Beyond economic man: feminist theory and economics*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
Foster, J.B. 2002. *Ecology against capitalism*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
Galbraith, J. 1987. *A history of economics: the past as the present*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
Georgescu-Roegen, N. 1971. *The entropy law and the economic process*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
Goody, J. 1989. *The logic of writing and the organization of society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Graedel, T.E. and B.R. Allenby 1995. *Industrial ecology*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
Granovetter, M. 1985. Economic action and social structure: the problem of embeddedness. *American Journal of Sociology* 91: 481–510.
Hart, K. 1986. Heads or tails? Two sides of the coin. *Man* (n.s.) 21: 637–56.
Jacobs, M. 1994. The limits to neoclassicism: towards an institutional environmental economics. In *Social theory and the environment* (eds) M. Redclift and T. Benton. New York: Routledge.
Jönson, G. 1996. *LCA: a tool for measuring environmental performance*. Leatherhead: Pira International.
Lanigan, S. 1993. *Valuing the unknown: cost-benefit analysis and air pollution*. Oxford: Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, Oxford University.
MacLennan, C. 1997. Democracy under the influence: cost–benefit analysis in the United States. In *Meanings of the market* (ed.) J.G. Carrier. Oxford: Berg.
Malinowski, B. 2002 (1922). *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. London: Routledge.
Marx, K. 1970. *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
McCloskey, D. 1993. Some consequences of a conjective economics. In *Beyond economic man: feminist theory and economics* (eds) M. Ferber and J. Nelson. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Miller, D. 1998. Conclusion: a theory of virtualism. In *Virtualism: a new political economy* (eds) J.G. Carrier and D. Miller. Oxford: Berg.
Miller, P. 1998. The margins of accounting. In *The laws of the market* (ed.) M. Callon. Oxford: Blackwell.
Muldrew, C. 1998. *The economy of obligation: the culture of credit and social relations in early modern England*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.
Pearce, D. and A. Markandya 1989. *Environmental policy benefits: monetary valuation.* Paris: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Putnam, R. 2000. *Bowling alone: the collapse and revival of American community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
Seroa da Motta, R. (ed.) 2001. *Environmental economics and policy making in developing countries*. Cheltenham, UK and Northampton, MA, USA: Edward Elgar.
Simmel, G. 1990. *The philosophy of money*. Second edition. London: Routledge.
SustainAbility 1993. *The LCA sourcebook: a European business guide to life-cycle assessment*. London: SustainAbility.
Thompson, M. 1979. *Rubbish theory: the creation and destruction of value*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Viederman, S. 1996. Sustainability's five capitals and three pillars. In *Building sustainable societies: a blueprint for a post-industrial world* (ed.) D. Pirages. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.
Warner, M. 2002. *Publics and counterpublics*. New York: Zone Books.
Wolf, E. 1982. *Europe and the people without history*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
World Commission for Environment and Development 1987. *Our common future.* (Brundtland Report.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Zelizer, V. 1985. *Pricing the priceless child: the changing social value of children.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Zelizer, V. 1989. The social meaning of money: special monies. *American Journal of Sociology* 95: 342–77.
Zelizer, V. 1994. *The social meaning of money*. New York: Basic Books.

29 Anthropology and development: the uneasy relationship

David Lewis

The relationship between anthropology and development has long been one fraught with difficulty, ever since Bronislaw Malinowski advocated a role for anthropologists as policy advisers to African colonial administrators and Sir Edward Evans-Pritchard urged them instead to do precisely the opposite and distance themselves from the tainted worlds of policy and 'applied' involvement (Grillo 2002). This chapter briefly introduces the concept of development and summarises the history of the relationship between development and anthropologists. Along the way, it considers three main positions which anthropologists have taken and may still take in relation to development. The first, that of antagonistic observer, is one characterised by critical distance and a basic hostility towards both the ideas of development and the motives of those who seek to promote it. The second is one of reluctant participation where institutional financial pressures and livelihood opportunities have led some anthropologists, with varying degrees of enthusiasm, to offer their professional services to policy makers and development organisations. The third is the long-standing tradition in which anthropologists have attempted to combine their community or agency-level interactions with people at the level of research with involvement with or on behalf of marginalised or poor people in the developing world.

Since the emergence of the term in its current usage after the Second World War, the concept of development went on to become one of the dominant ideas of the twentieth century, embodying a set of aspirations and techniques aimed at bringing about positive change or progress in Africa, Asia, Latin America and other areas of the world. Development brings with it a set of confusing, shifting terminologies and has been prone to rapidly changing fashions. The popular demarcation of 'First World' (Western capitalist), 'Second World' (Soviet, Eastern Bloc and other socialist areas) and 'Third World' (the rest) became common during the Cold War. More recently, the still common distinction between a wealthy developed 'North' and a poor, less-developed 'South' has its origins in the UN-sponsored Brandt Commission report of 1980. The policy language of 'basic needs' in the 1970s has shifted to new paradigms of 'sustainable development' in the 1990s, alongside more recent attention to 'building civil society' and 'good governance'. The language of development, as well as its practices, has

changed over time as the global context has also shifted, indicating a growing sophistication in its understanding of problems of poverty as well as perhaps a lack of confidence in some of the basic assumptions of the 'developers'.

Whatever the terminology that is in vogue (the field is characterised by an ever-shifting landscape of labels, concepts and fashions), the 'development industry' remains a powerful and complex constellation of public and private agencies channelling large amounts of international development assistance, including inter-governmental organisations of the United Nations, multilateral and bilateral donors such as the World Bank or the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and a vast array of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) ranging from small specialised, grassroots concerns to large transnational organisations such as Oxfam or the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC).[1] Relations between anthropologists and the world of development ideas and practices date from the early days of the discipline during the colonial period and have continued, in various forms, up to the present. Such relationships have encompassed the spheres of research and action, from positions of sympathetic involvement as well as the stances of disengaged critique or even outright hostility. Whatever point of view anthropologists may take about development, the concept of development, itself a diverse and highly contested term, remains one of the central organising and defining systems of our age and will therefore continue to demand anthropological attention.

What is development?

'Development' in its modern sense first came to official prominence when it was used by United States President Harry S Truman in 1949 as part of the rationale for post-war reconstruction in 'underdeveloped' areas of the world, based on provision of international financial assistance and modern technology transfer. Development has subsequently been strongly associated primarily with economic growth. However, there has also been a growing recognition that while the well-being of an economy may form a precondition for development it is not a sufficient one, and that attention too has to be paid to issues such as income and asset redistribution to reduce inequality, support for human rights and social welfare, and the sustainable stewardship of environmental resources. The Human Development Index developed by the United Nations Development Programme at the start of the 1990s has attempted to address such concerns, at least in part, by combining gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, life expectancy and a measure of educational attainment (see Blim chap. 19 supra).

However, few words offer as many definitional difficulties as 'development', and it remains a highly contested term. While dictionary definitions focus on the idea of 'a stage of growth or advancement', development remains

a complex and ambiguous term which carries with it several layers of meaning. As a verb, 'development' refers to activities required to bring about change or progress, and is often linked strongly to economic growth. As an adjective, 'development' implies a standard against which different rates of progress may be compared, and it therefore takes on a subjective, judgemental element in which societies or communities are sometimes compared and then positioned at different 'stages' of an evolutionary development schema. Indeed, development is often understood in Darwinian terms as a biological metaphor for organic growth and evolution, while in a Durkheimian sense it can be associated with ideas about the increasing social, economic and political complexity in transitions from 'traditional' to 'modern' societies. At the same time, 'development' has also come to be associated with 'planned social change' and the idea of an external intervention by one group in the affairs of another. Often this is in the form of a project, as part of conscious efforts by outsiders to intervene in a 'less-developed' community or country in order to produce positive change. Finally, within radical critiques, development is viewed in terms of an organised system of power and practice which has formed part of the colonial and neo-colonial domination of poorer countries by the West.

The belief in the promotion of progress arose during the period of the Enlightenment, in the eighteenth century in Northern Europe. During this period, the rise of competitive capitalism undermined prevailing relations of feudalism and ushered in a period in Western thought which emphasised rational knowledge, the rise of technology and science and the dichotomies of 'backward' and 'advanced' societies. By the colonial era, it was common for the colonisers to construct themselves as rational agents of progress, while local people were portrayed as child-like or backward. The introduction of European-style religion, education and administrative systems went hand in hand with the quest for economic gain. By the early twentieth century, the relationship between colonial administration and ideas of planned change had become more explicit, and responsibility for economic development came to be complemented by the incorporation of welfare objectives and responsibility for minimum levels of health, education and nutrition for colonial subjects.

After 1945, in Europe and North America, development was increasingly presented in terms of economic growth and modernity. The benefits of economic growth would 'trickle down' to the poor, while the transfer of new technology would bring material benefits. Modernisation theory, under which these ideas came to be loosely grouped, was exemplified by the approach of US economist W.W. Rostow. He argued that there were a series of stages of development through which traditional, low-income societies moved, ultimately reaching a point of 'take off', based on financial investment, improved governance and modern technologies, which would eventually set

them on a course of self-sustaining growth. Part of this tradition continues today (though without the central position previously envisaged for the state) in the priorities of international agencies such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, which favour 'structural adjustment' policies to 'free' markets and reduce the role of government, and the World Trade Organization (WTO), which locates development within the reform of international trade regulations and the freer movement of capital between North and South. Although state-led technology transfer has become a less-favoured development strategy since the 1980s, the technological paradigm of development remains stronger than ever in the bio-technology movement, which still promises technological solutions to development problems in agriculture, such as the nutritionally-enhanced 'golden rice' currently being developed by international agribusiness (see Bruinsma 2003).

A stronger emphasis on historical and political factors was found in the 'dependency' school of development theorists, which brought together radical scholars many from the United Nations Economic Commission of Latin America (ECLA) (see Eades, 'Anthropology, political economy and world-system theory' chap. 2 supra). The dependency theorists rejected the modernisation paradigm and focused instead on the unequal relationship between North and South in relation to terms of trade, arguing that an active process of 'underdevelopment' had taken place as peripheral economies were integrated into the capitalist system on unequal terms, primarily as providers of cheap raw materials for export to rich industrialised countries. The dependency approach was popularised by the work of A.G. Frank during the 1970s, but became less influential during the 1980s as it came under attack from a number of different directions. It was criticised for oversimplifying Marx's ideas about the simultaneously destructive and progressive force of capitalism in relation to feudalism, for downplaying the range of strategies deployed by peripheral individuals and groups in resisting and renegotiating their structural position within the global system, and for remaining silent on solutions to problems of poverty and underdevelopment short of outright revolution (Gardner and Lewis 1996). Nevertheless, the legacy of dependency theory remains, and elements of its central ideas continue within current critiques of international trade rules, subsidy regimes and supply chains, which are increasingly being taken up by mainstream movements and radical activists alike.

Frustration with the scale of global poverty, exploitation and inequality led some academics and activists to usher in an era of 'post-development' thinking in the 1990s, which advocated a radical rethinking of the assumptions and the goals of development, characterised in this critique as a Western cultural mind-set which imposed homogenising materialist values, idealised rational–scientific power and created unprecedented levels of environmental

destruction. Much of this critique was not entirely new, but instead continued Marxist and dependency theorists' concerns with new forms of colonial domination and the damage to diversity caused by cruder versions of modernisation.

Antagonistic observers

Some anthropologists select the ideas, processes and institutions of development as their field of study, but such work has tended to be highly suspicious, if not frankly critical, in its approach. At one level, anthropological work on development has flowed seamlessly from many anthropologists' long-standing concerns with the social and cultural effects of economic change in the less-developed areas of the world. Such work has shown how the incorporation of local communities into wider capitalist relations of production and exchange has profound implications for both. For example, Wilson's (1942) work in Zambia in the late 1930s showed the ways in which industrialisation and urbanisation processes were structured by colonial policies that discouraged permanent settlement and led to social instability, as massive levels of male migration took place back and forth between rural and urban areas. Long's (1977) 'actor-oriented' work in Peru explored local, small-scale processes of growth, entrepreneurialism and diversification in an area for which the dependency theorists might have argued that there would only be stagnation, challenging macro-level structural analyses by focusing on the complexity and dynamism of people's own strategies and struggles. Updating such approaches to understanding social and economic change, Arce and Long (2000) make the case for the role of the anthropologist as furthering understanding of the 'localised modernities' through ethnographic study of the ways in which dominant development processes are fragmented, reinterpreted and embedded.

A more explicit area of anthropological analysis in relation to development has been research on the performance of development projects, by studying the ways in which such projects operate within and act upon local populations. Here the dominant emphasis has been to understand the reasons why they 'fail', with few studies bothering to examine why some projects 'succeed'.[2] A classic study of this kind was Barnett's (1977) analysis of the Gezira land-leasing scheme in Sudan introduced by the British in the 1920s, which aimed to control local labour and secure cotton exports. The study found that the paternalistic structure of the intervention led to stagnation and dependency, since there were no incentives for farmers to innovate. Another key theme within anthropological work has been the gendered character of outsiders' understandings of productive relations and intra-household processes. For example, Rogers (1980) set out the patriarchal assumptions brought by development planners to the design and implementation of development

interventions, such as the skewed emphasis on the nuclear family structures in contexts where extended families are the norm, or an engagement only with male farmers or household heads to the exclusion of women's roles in production and decision making. Finally, in another influential study, Mamdani (1972) laid bare the gulf which existed between the outsiders' assumptions and local peoples' priorities, when he analysed the failure of a family-planning project in India. This failure was believed by planners to be the result of people's ignorance of the advantages of smaller families and of family-planning techniques, but Mamdani showed that in reality it was the outcome of strong incentives among the poor to maintain high fertility levels, since large families were given high cultural and economic value.

The focus within these kinds of anthropological studies has mainly been on the so-called 'beneficiaries' of development assistance, and in general there has been rather less anthropological work undertaken on the internal organisation and workings of the aid industry itself. Research on the so-called 'developers' who seek to bring change to local populations, though less plentiful, has nevertheless proved a fertile and instructive field of study when it has been carried out. A recurring theme has been the ways in which encounters between outside officials and local communities are structured by 'top-down' hierarchies of power and authority. For instance, Robertson (1984) examined the relations between local people and bureaucrats and focused particularly on the state, providing an anthropological critique of the theory and practice of planning. The well-known work of Chambers (1983), though not himself an anthropologist by training, on power and participation in development has also been concerned with relations between people and professionals, and Chambers has gone on to develop this theme and challenge conventional development policy and training assumptions at the levels of both theory and practice.

More recently, a highly influential study by Ferguson (1990), based on fieldwork in Lesotho, drew on Michel Foucault's work on power and discourse to extend and develop the anthropological tradition of the development-project ethnography into new terrain. Ferguson showed how a World Bank project in Lesotho functioned primarily as a system that extends state and development agency power. He argued that the project served as an instrument to depoliticise development issues, transforming social and economic relations into 'technical' problems that could then be 'solved' through bureaucratic intervention. Moving away from the arenas of state and multilateral donors into the non-governmental sector (which has grown to become a major player within development work), Harrison and Crewe (1998) undertook ethnographic work within two international NGOs working in Africa, exploring the ways in which they interpreted problems of poverty and the manner in which they constructed themselves as organisations. Studies

such as these provided detailed insights into the workings of development organisations, but made no claim to offer answers or solutions to the still disappointing results being obtained by those in search of development.

Answers of a kind were offered by another influential, but completely hostile, study of the workings of development. Escobar's (1995) study traces the ways in which development as an idea has constructed and framed the concept of the 'Third World' as a location which is defined and acted upon by the West, and he documents and advocates resistance to its onslaught. This book reflected increasing attention among anthropologists to the fact that development exists beyond the configuration of agencies and individuals attempting to implement change, and has become one of the dominant ideas of the post-war era. As such, it constitutes a social phenomenon that affects not just livelihoods and living standards, but also the ways in which we see the world. Escobar's conclusion, in line with the post-development view, is that the idea of development is itself degraded and outmoded and that only the rise of new local, identity-based social movements that directly challenge the orthodoxies of development offer hope for a new paradigm within a 'post-development' future.

Reluctant participants?

In the 1960s and 1970s, the tradition within anthropology that engaged with development and modernisation continued, and some of this work began to influence development work more widely. For example, Geertz's (1963) research on Indonesian agricultural change began to link anthropological research to practical concerns about technological change and land use. It showed the ways in which adaptation of an increasingly complex and 'involuted' system of wetland agricultural production reflected both cultural priorities and material pressures, and was widely read by agricultural economists and policy makers (Gardner and Lewis 1996). But the study of development, in the sense of traditional societies undergoing social and economic transformation, was seen by many other academic anthropologists as only of 'practical' or 'policy' relevance and therefore peripheral to the main theoretical core of the discipline, which many thought should concern itself with the description and analysis of 'societies and cultures as little contaminated by "development" as possible' (Ferguson 1996: 157).

As a result, there have been many anthropologists who have avoided any formal engagement with the topic of development at all. But there have been pressures which have led other anthropologists to participate in development at some level, sometimes due as much to pragmatism as wholehearted commitment. The long tradition of underfunding of higher education institutions in the UK, which began to become serious during the 1980s, hit anthropology departments particularly hard, especially since there were

relatively few options available for academic anthropologists to generate additional funding through consultancy. The relevance of anthropology to the modern world was also increasingly called into question by government and funders. The growth of the multidisciplinary field of development studies as an academic discipline and its subsequent expansion, particularly in the UK, also contributed to a sense of insecurity in some university anthropology departments. Limited opportunities for anthropologists in the business world led, perhaps inevitably, to a growth of anthropological engagement with consultancy assignments for organisations such as the Department for International Development (DFID) and the United Nations. These were sometimes in the form of short-term inputs as consultants or commissioned researchers; other times these were longer assignments or full professional employment as anthropologists working within the expanding fields of 'social development' and project evaluation which opened up within the World Bank, DFID and many NGOs.

This trend was also associated with the rise of radical development theory and the growing politicisation of anthropology itself as a discipline in the 1970s. The shift away from modernisation theory, which many anthropologists had considered crude and ethnocentric, towards critical dependency theory within development studies also attracted the attention of anthropologists, who began to locate their detailed studies of specific, small groups within wider political–economy contexts. Eric Wolf's (1982) *Europe and the people without history* set out a global, historical political economy which showed how the capitalist world order linked even the most remote communities into its system through processes of economic, technical and cultural incorporation. The trend towards a more critical, politicised anthropology also opened up scope for engagement with development because it made the subject more intellectually interesting and because it gave the academic discipline of anthropology, especially at a time when university-based scholarship was under pressure to demonstrate its relevance, an opportunity to show that it had something to say about the wider world, rather than just about its more conventional 'tribal' concerns (Ferguson 1996: 158).

The period of post-modern reflection which overtook anthropology later in the 1980s also served to refocus anthropological attention on, among other things, the idea of development. In particular, Marcus and Fischer (1986) questioned the tendency of anthropologists to focus on an ahistorical or exotic 'other' and instead argued for a new focus which would integrate the ideas and institutions of the anthropologists' own societies and contexts, emphasising the need to show the ways in which power is acquired and exercised across the dimensions of the local, national and global. Elements of this post-modern anthropological agenda also led back to the study of development, because the development landscape formed an ideal space for the study of a wide range of

familiar and less familiar institutions and relationships that linked ideas, individuals and groups at transnational, national and local levels. It also simultaneously opened up fertile ground for anthropologists to reconsider their own roles as actors within the production of knowledge about and practice within development. In doing so, it also began to challenge the validity of any simple distinction between those anthropologists working 'on' and those working 'in' development. While anthropological post-modernism was primarily concerned with debating a more reflexive approach to ethnographic writing, it also contributed new ideas to 'applied anthropology' (see below), by suggesting ways in which anthropological work could create structures for community-level problem analysis and empowerment.

Work such as Escobar's had drawn useful attention to issues of power and inequality and the ways in which 'development' has acted as a system of ideas and policies which have sought to define and control whole areas of the world. But it was also heavily criticised for its tendency to construct a homogeneous vision of the 'development gaze' that is insensitive to the broad range of ideas constituting development thinking and approaches, and to the ways in which people's own ideas of what constitutes 'progress' overlaps and engages in subtle ways with those of the developers. For example, perhaps in the spirit of involved scepticism, Gardner and Lewis (2000) attempted to show the ways in which the policy discourse within the UK bilateral aid programme changed in relation to the production of a new White Paper in 1997 as the former Overseas Development Administration (ODA) evolved into the DFID, with new emphases and priorities based on changing political agendas and understandings. Not enough research has yet been done by anthropologists on seeking to understand the institutional and organisational field that makes up the world of development ideas and practices, nor on the ways in which people outside the formal boundaries of the development industry share and are shaped by its ideas.

Engaged activists

There have long been anthropologists interested in using their knowledge for practical purposes. The field of applied anthropology, defined as the use of anthropological methods and ideas in practical or policy contexts, has seen anthropologists collaborate with activists, policy makers and professionals within a range of fields, including that of development. From the British colonial administration in Africa to the Office of Indian Affairs in the United States, anthropologists have involved themselves in applied work and contributed research findings to policy makers on issues such as local customs, dispute settlement and land rights. The gradual professionalisation of the development industry from the 1970s onwards led to a growth of opportunities for anthropologists to work within development agencies as staff or

consultants, just as anthropologists also took up jobs within fields as diverse as community work and corporate personnel departments. In this role, anthropologists often acted as cultural translators, interpreting local realities for administrators and planners. At the same time, anthropology came to be seen as a tool which potentially provided the means to understand, and therefore to some extent control, people's behaviour, as beneficiaries, employees or customers.

Applied anthropologists have drawn on different aspects of anthropological thinking in the ways they have tried to contribute to development work. First, by stressing an approach which gives equal emphasis to both social and economic aspects of societal change, anthropologists have helped to counter the dominant privileging of the economic in development thinking. They have contributed to a critique of modernism and its predominantly economistic view of the world, showing for example that markets are socially embedded institutions and that the economically rational behaviour of neoclassical paradigms is tempered by pragmatism. At the methodological level, applied anthropologists have taken the open-ended, long-term participant observation tradition and tried to relate fieldwork more tightly and in a time-bound way to a set of focused research questions. An example of this is research in rural northwestern Bangladesh by Lewis, Wood and Gregory (1996), concerning an ODA aquaculture project. Through their extensive participant observation, the researchers were able to identify a complex range of hidden (to the planners) intermediaries within local fish production and marketing networks, and their findings contributed to the rethinking of objectives, away from a concern solely with production and towards a greater emphasis on rural poverty reduction. The growth of participatory paradigms in development practices has also drawn extensively on anthropological methodology (compare Chambers 1983), albeit with more of an emphasis on 'quick and dirty' fieldwork than many anthropologists would wish for.

Applied anthropologists have also drawn attention to issues of Western bias in the assumptions that inform development initiatives, uncovering areas of cultural difference and highlighting the value of local or 'indigenous' knowledge. The growth of interest in indigenous knowledge has now been a long-standing area of engagement between anthropologists and development practitioners, with its recognition that development interventions should be informed by the systems of knowledge recognised by local people. For example, the rise of 'farming systems research' in the 1970s was informed by field-based anthropological insights into farmers' own complex understandings of their agricultural practices (Collinson 1987). More recently, Loomis (2002) has made an eloquent case, based on his research within Maori communities in New Zealand, that local ideas about resource conservation could form a sounder basis for 'sustainable development' than many of the

paradigms and approaches advocated by development agencies, and so should be incorporated more fully into policy. The distinction between indigenous knowledge and Western scientific knowledge has been subsequently criticised within anthropology, since it can set up a somewhat bland and unhelpful dualism between Western-scientific and other systems of knowledge, and may also overlook the fact that Western formal knowledge systems are themselves as embedded culturally as other knowledge systems (Sillitoe 2002).

Applied anthropologists have played several different types of roles, including mediation between communities and outsiders, helping to influence public opinion through journalism or advocacy work, helping to provide assistance directly during a crisis, or working as consultants to development organisations. Consultancy work by applied anthropologists within the NGO and donor communities has expanded considerably in the community development field and covers a variety of sectors and projects, including micro-finance, social forestry, slum improvement, monitoring and evaluation and training on participatory techniques (Panayiotopolous 2002).

Closely related to the discussion of applied anthropology is the involvement of some anthropologists in more explicitly activist concerns. The emergence of what Tax (1968) termed 'action anthropology', practised within marginalised Native American communities in the United States, attempted to combine applied work and responsibility to members of the community with the search for knowledge. Tax began developing this form of work in the 1940s, and the approach went on to became influential in the United States and in parts of Europe as well. The proponents of this branch of applied anthropology became concerned with explicitly political goals informed by moral commitment, as in a situation in which members of a community are subject to an immediate threat such as the construction of a dam. Related to this type of work is the involvement of anthropologists in organisations, such as Cultural Survival, which seek to protect vulnerable communities whose way of life is under threat from developers. As a form of applied anthropology, such efforts may often be informed by a desire to frustrate the efforts of development agencies, in line with the views of many in the post-development school.

The sub-discipline of 'applied' anthropology has, since its emergence in the colonial period, always been controversial within the discipline. After the Second World War there was a reaction in the United States against the widespread involvement of anthropologists in the occupation and subsequent administration of overseas territories, and in Britain the process of decolonisation went hand in hand with a critique of the colonial origins of the discipline of anthropology itself. There were also many who saw the application of anthropological knowledge in other societies as a betrayal of the principle of cultural relativism, in which it was seen as unethical for

representatives of one culture to try to change relations within another. The status of applied anthropologists within the wider discipline was also a source of tension, with applied departments and academics frequently considered second rate, leading to its marginalisation during the 1960s and 1970s.

There still remain three broad sets of arguments against applied anthropology, as Schönhuth (2002) has shown from within the German academic context. Within his schema, the 'purists' argue that scholarly endeavour should always be separated from its application. An engineer should be considered an 'applied physicist', and therefore an applied anthropologist is best regarded as a social worker or a politician, with no place in the formal discipline of anthropology. Schönhuth's second group, the 'innocents', are concerned that development will destroy traditional, fragile cultures before they can be studied, and therefore want nothing to do with it. Finally, the 'ethically correct' adherents to a third position argue against any kind of collusion with the practitioners of development because they simply regard development policy and practice as inherently immoral.

Conclusion

The picture presented in this chapter, of three anthropological positions in relation to development, doubtless involves an element of caricature. However, it does illuminate different aspects of anthropology's complex relationship with development. The three strands rarely exist separately, but are intertwined in complex ways. Individual anthropologists are unlikely to inhabit just one of these positions, but instead may juggle various combinations of them at one time or another. The difficulty of unpacking these relationships, and their overall sensitivity even today, is perhaps best explained by Ferguson (1996: 160), who argues that development can in one sense be understood as anthropology's 'evil twin'. Development is concerned with many of the same geographical areas and communities that have attracted anthropologists, but threatens and challenges many of the assumptions which anthropologists have traditionally held dear, about the value of the traditional, the local and the autonomous. For anthropologists, Ferguson goes on, development therefore carries with it 'a disturbing, inverted resemblance' to their discipline and 'haunts the house of anthropology' like an 'uninvited relative'. To be critical of the very idea of development, he argues, is to invite a complete re-evaluation of the very idea of anthropology itself.

Within the literature, it has become common to make a distinction between 'development anthropologists', working broadly within the agendas of development institutions doing research or advocating particular policies, and 'anthropologists of development', who work on the subject of development itself, often taking a critical stance which questions its ideas, values and purposes (Grillo and Rew 1985). The intermingling of the three positions

outlined here, and the illusory nature of the belief that one can separate anthropological work 'on' and 'in' development, requires us to move beyond such dualism. As Harrison and Crewe (1998) argue, the boundary between development anthropologists and anthropologists of development has come under increasing criticism for its artificiality, since it obscures the positioning of all anthropologists within the dominant organising idea of development.

Long and Lang (1992) highlighted the ways in which anthropological work could also take as its field of study the 'communities' of development projects and institutions. As Long himself acknowledges, it is necessary to go further than this and show how anthropologists working on development issues, whether in an applied or theoretical level, all do work which necessarily takes place within what Ferguson (1990) terms the dominant 'interpretive grid' of development discourse. After a revival of interest in development by anthropologists during the 1990s, we are perhaps moving into a new period of engagement which goes beyond the applied-theoretical distinction and which seeks to reveal more of the ethnographic detail of the organisational apparatus of development, as well as a deeper analysis of the ways in which the concept of development has come to play a central role in our lives.

These days there are calls for anthropologists to engage more fully in both the practices of development and in new thinking about development. As anthropologists we can be critical observers, but we are also necessarily participants. For some anthropologists the emphasis is on a renewed, more meaningful practical involvement and, for example, Sillitoe (2002: 1) writes:

> The time has come for anthropology to consolidate its place in development practice, not merely as frustrated post-project critic but as implementing partner. There are growing demands for its skills and insights to further understanding of agricultural, health, community and other issues.

For others, the emphasis is on building a new anthropology of development which can generate insights with both theoretical and practical implications. For example, recent work by Quarles Van Ufford, Giri and Mosse (2003) suggests that anthropological perspectives can illuminate a set of important disjunctures in the constellation of ideas and practices that constitute development. Development, they argue, has been variously characterised as 'hope', in that it carries with it ideas about shaping a better future; as 'administration', in that since the 1950s it has amassed a constellation of agencies and technologies designed to produce it; and finally as 'critical understanding', in the sense that it forms a site of knowledge about the world. Disjunctures are present in the ways in which development ideas and practices are variously located within governmental, non-governmental and market-institutional forms, as they are in the tension between modes of action and of reflection, and in the senses of past and present that pervade development

debates. In an era in which development agencies have replaced the goals and aspirations of development with the focus on results and 'manageability', which are characteristic of high modernism, the authors make the plea for a new, morally-informed development as 'global responsibility'.

Anthropology has managed to influence development ideas and practices in many ways, from the new importance given to anthropologist 'social development advisers' within DFID to the growth of participatory practices among non-governmental organisations and others. The merit or otherwise of such influence will continue to be debated, but anthropological contributions increasingly take the form not just of what anthropologists do within development agencies and processes but also what they say about development. In order to help build these new perspectives, more ethnographic work is needed, to provide insights into the 'black box' of development organisations and interventions, to challenge the growing managerialism which obscures development histories and to offset tendencies towards social engineering implied by recent World Development Reports and the new 'bottom line' of the Millennium Development Goals.

Notes

1. The overall scale of international development aid is difficult to quantify. Recent figures quoted by Little (2003) indicate that the World Bank provided over $6.8 billion in 2000 to poor countries for economic development, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) gave $54 billion in development aid. NGOs in 1998 distributed around $10 billion, half of which consisted of official funds from the donors above.
2. Recent work by Mosse (2002) challenges this instrumentalist view of projects and development policy by analysing the ways in which a wide range of interests and coalitions in practice negotiate the labelling of 'success' or 'failure' along political lines.

References

Arce, A. and N. Long 2000. *Anthropology, development and modernities*. London: Routledge.

Barnett, T. 1977. *The Gezira scheme: an illusion of development*. London: Frank Cass.

Bruinsma, J. 2003. *World agriculture: towards 2015/2030: an FAO perspective*. London: Earthscan / Food and Agriculture Organization.

Chambers, R. 1983. *Rural development: putting the first last*. London: Longman.

Collinson, M. 1987. Farming systems research: procedures for technology development. *Experimental Agriculture* 23: 365–86.

Escobar, A. 1995. *Encountering development: the making and unmaking of the Third World.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Ferguson, J. 1990. *The anti-politics machine: 'development', depoliticisation and bureaucratic power in Lesotho*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ferguson, J. 1996. Development. In *Encyclopaedia of social and cultural anthropology* (eds) A. Barnard and J. Spencer. London: Routledge.

Gardner, K. and D. Lewis 1996. *Anthropology, development and the post-modern challenge*. London: Pluto.

Gardner, K. and D. Lewis 2000. Development paradigms overturned or business as usual? Development discourse and the UK White Paper on International Development. *Critique of Anthropology* 20 (1): 15–29.

Geertz, C. 1963. *Agricultural involution: the processes of change in Indonesia*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Grillo, R. 2002. Anthropologists and development. In *The companion to development studies* (eds) V. Desai and R.B. Potter. London: Edward Arnold.
Grillo, R. and A. Rew (eds) 1985. *Social anthropology and development policy*. London: Tavistock.
Harrison, E. and E. Crewe 1998. *Whose development? An ethnography of aid*. London: Zed Books.
Lewis, D., G.D. Wood and R. Gregory 1996. *Trading the silver seed: local knowledge and market moralities in aquacultural development*. London: Intermediate Technology Publications.
Little, D. 2003. *The paradox of wealth and poverty: mapping the dilemmas of global development*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview.
Long, N. 1977. *An introduction to the sociology of developing societies*. London: Tavistock.
Long, N. and A. Lang (eds) 1992. *Battlefields of knowledge: the interlocking of theory and practice in social research and development*. London: Routledge.
Loomis, T. 2002. Indigenous populations and sustainable development: building on indigenous approaches to holistic, self-determined development. *World Development* 28: 893–910.
Mamdani, M. 1972. *The myth of population control: family, caste and class in an Indian village*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
Marcus, G. and M. Fischer 1986. *Anthropology as cultural critique*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Mosse, D. 2002. Linking policy to livelihood changes through projects. Presentation to Department for International Development (DFID), London, 5 July.
Panayiotopolous, P. 2002. Anthropology consultancy in the UK and community development in the Third World: a difficult dialogue. *Development in Practice* 12: 45–58.
Quarles Van Ufford, P., A.K. Giri and D. Mosse 2003. Interventions in development: towards a new moral understanding of our experiences and an agenda for the future. In *A moral critique of development: in search of global responsibilities* (eds) P. Quarles Van Ufford and A.K. Giri. London: Routledge.
Robertson, A.F. 1984. *People and the state: an anthropology of planned development*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Rogers, B. 1980. *The domestication of women: discrimination in developing societies*. London: Kogan Page.
Schönhuth, M. 2002. Negotiating with knowledge at development interfaces: anthropology and the quest for participation. In *Participating in development: approaches to indigenous knowledge* (eds) P. Sillitoe, A. Bicker and J. Pottier. London: Routledge.
Sillitoe, P. 2002. Participant observation to participatory development: making anthropology work. In *Participating in development: approaches to indigenous knowledge* (eds) P. Sillitoe, A. Bicker and J. Pottier. London: Routledge.
Tax, S. (ed.) 1968. *The people vs. the system*. Chicago: Acme.
Wilson, G. 1942. *An essay on the economics of detribalisation in Northern Rhodesia. Part II*. Livingston, Northern Rhodesia: Rhodes–Livingstone Institute.
Wolf, E. 1982. *Europe and the people without history*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

PART VI

REGIONS

Introduction

I said in the Introduction to this handbook that economic anthropology, like the discipline as a whole, tends to be fragmented into sets of scholars working on different regions of the world. The relatively brief chapters in this final part present the main themes that are important in selected ethnographic regions, and comparing them shows how much divergence in interest exists within the sub-discipline. These being relatively short chapters, they are not intended as thorough overviews of work in the different regions. Rather, they are offered as introductions to the central topics and writings in each, which should help provide a foundation for those interested in reading more deeply in regional literature.

30 South America

Terry Roopnaraine

> High up the Igarapé Onça two young men with their two young wives, each with two children hardly more than toddlers, had settled by themselves well away from the large villages. Each man had married the other's sister. They lived in one oblong earth-floored house, a separate hearth at each end. I arrived to visit and hung my hammock with the man I knew better. In the morning both men went to hunt. Both got a single peccary. Both hearths cooked up a stew. Our end had its meal ready first, and as we began to eat a child from this end was sent with a calabash of stew to the other end. This was deposited in the pot cooking at that hearth. Later, as we at our end lolled in our hammocks, a child came from the other end with a calabash of their stew which was taken by the woman at this end and put into her pot. Nothing was said. The exchange wasn't, of course, an 'economic' act which distributed scarce resources. It was a moral act, expressing the obligations of the relationship the people were in. (Campbell 1995: 144)

The economic anthropology of South America is ethnographically and theoretically diverse. It will therefore be useful to begin by specifying the geographical reach of this chapter. Here, for the sake of both space and breadth of available material, we shall concentrate on continental South America, and not attempt to do justice to the considerable body of anthropological work carried out in Central America and Mexico. And while acknowledging the implicit and explicit linkages among local, national and global economies, we shall also restrict the discussion here to comparatively micro-level economic processes. Finally, we note that the sources referred to here are either published in or translated into English: there exists a substantial bibliography in Spanish, Portuguese and French, as well as smaller selections of German and Dutch works.

The economic anthropology of South America covers a broad range of societies, including *ladino*, *mestizo* and indigenous populations, *caboclos* and other groups defined loosely by subsistence occupation: 'extractivists' such as rubber-tappers, loggers, wild-animal trappers, fishermen, miners of gold and other valuable substances; ranchers, *campesinos* and agricultural peasantries.[1] Because most South Americans now live in cities, there is also notable overlap between urban and economic anthropology on the continent. The indigenous societies of continental South America are usually divided by anthropologists into three very broad population areas: Lowland Amazonian groups, who live in the forested basins of the Amazon and Orinoco rivers and their respective tributaries; Andean groups, living in the Andean highlands; and people of the

montaña region, which lies between Amazonia and the Andes. These categories are in effect topographical ones, a fact which gives some indication of the primary social, cultural and economic importance assigned to the nature of land by non-urban South American peoples and the anthropologists who work with them.

Within the economic anthropology of South America, various distinctions exist at the theoretical and thematic levels. In this survey, we shall construct a kind of typological framework around the published material. We can begin by setting up a series of contrasting pairs which, while not completely homologous, none the less overlap considerably and together constitute a useful schema for thinking about the *modelling* of relations of production, exchange and consumption in South America. That is to say, they are helpful in thematically organising the work which has been done on economic anthropology in South America, but are not a viable way of 'categorising' cultures.[2] While recognising the risks of reification inherent in such an approach, we regard the explanatory benefits as substantial; we ask the reader to bear in mind that these are no more than *general patterns to help in reading the economic anthropology of South America*. We can sort these pairs into two roughly complementary groups, an approach recognisable to readers already familiar with the anthropology of South America. In addition to these two sets, we will need a third 'in-between' group, which reflects the considerable body of work dealing explicitly with the articulation of very different economic idioms. Remembering that not every ethnography will embody one entire set of themes or the other, these groups might look something like Table 30.1.

Table 30.1 Modelling economic activities in South America

Production mainly for use	Production mainly for exchange
Gift idiom dominant	Commodity idiom dominant
Socially embedded economic relations	Socially atomised economic relations
Generalised or balanced reciprocity	Balanced or negative reciprocity
Subjects control means of production	Subjects sell their labour
Less industrialised populations	More industrialised populations
Symbolic ecology, cultural ecology	Informal economy, political economy
Articulation of radically different social, cultural and economic idioms	
'People in between' or in transition between different economic idioms	

Interpreting contrast and complementarity

Let us work though the table and expand on some of the points raised by it, remembering that these are simply thematic and theoretical characteristics to

help us organise our thinking about different models of society and economy found in the economic anthropology of South America. We shall begin by working down through the complementary pairs in each row.

'Production mainly for use vs. production mainly for exchange' refers to the destination of economic goods: have they been produced primarily for individual, household or community use, or have they been produced expressly for sale or barter to other transactors? This distinction in turn becomes a model in itself, contrasting 'use-value' production with 'exchange-value' production systems (see, for example, Taussig 1980: 126–39). It is *almost* congruent with the dichotomy 'gift idiom dominant vs. commodity idiom dominant', which makes an analogous contrast between the two classic 'ideal types' of exchange. In the quotation at the start of this chapter, writing about the Tupi-Guaraní Wayapí of northeastern Amazonia, Alan Campbell makes precisely this distinction, stressing the gift morality, as opposed to the commoditised nature of the transaction he describes. 'Socially embedded economic relations vs. socially atomised economic relations' is another dichotomy with strong links to the preceding pairs; in this case, however, the focus is not production or exchange, but is the kind of relationship that exists between transactors. Again, this contrast is made in Campbell's peccary stew example, when he flags 'the obligations of the relationship people were in' and links these to the moral nature of the exchange.

'Generalised or balanced reciprocity vs. balanced or negative reciprocity' is a complementary set first elaborated by Marshall Sahlins as part of an overall distribution schema. In this schema, 'generalised reciprocity' refers to economic behaviour such as sharing, pooling resources, and instances of giving in which the obligation to reciprocate is weak or non-existent (Sahlins 1972: 193–4). Pooling and sharing are common features of Lowland Amazonian consumption patterns (see, for example, the discussion of communal meals among the Panare of Venezuela, in Henley 1982: 74–7). 'Balanced reciprocity' is used to characterise transactions in which imbalance is not tolerated beyond a given time limit (Sahlins 1972: 194–5). This broad category is in fact a spectrum which includes commodity exchange at one end, and interestingly, instances of gift exchange which demand reciprocity within a mutually understood timeframe at the other. For this reason, we include it on both sides of the table. 'Negative reciprocity' (Sahlins 1972: 195–6) refers to systems in which transactors attempt to get something for nothing, or for as little as possible. Sahlins includes both theft and barter in this category; in the particular case of South American ethnography, it would be an appropriate way of theorising debt peonage, slavery and other forms of coerced labour. Debt peonage is a notorious form of coerced labour which dominated the South American rubber trade until well into the twentieth century (Taussig 1987). Although the natural rubber industry has now collapsed, debt peonage

continues to this day in other South American industries, especially those located in the remoter forest regions, beyond any kind of legal surveillance (Hugh-Jones 1992: 42–74). It is essentially a system in which labourers, most typically indigenous or impoverished rural people, are advanced commodities on credit against a promise of future supply of goods desired by a patron. However, when the goods are supplied, the debt is not actually cancelled; other charges are added, such as usurious interest or exorbitant food, lodging or transportation bills. For the patron, the aim is to ensure that the debt is never paid off, thus securing an unending supply of cheap labour; for the victim, it is a difficult system to escape once entrapped, not least because of the very real threat of physical violence. Michael Taussig theorises about debt peonage in an innovative manner. Central to his analysis is the idea of the *fetishised debt*. This is a concept based on Karl Marx's notion of commodity fetishism, in which commodities take on animate qualities, while effectively de-animating the people who produce them. For Marx, exploitation of labour is concealed in this discourse because the relations of production cease to be human relations and become naturalised market relations. Taussig's notion of debt fetishism is analogous: debts become animated and people literally *become* debts (Taussig 1987: 69–70). This, he argues, is a central element to the self-sustaining nature of debt peonage.

The contrast between models in which 'subjects control means of production' and systems in which they 'sell their labour' is a fundamental one with origins firmly in Marxian theories of the political economy (see below). It brings to the fore the degree of control, or alienation, which people experience in their roles as producers of economic goods. Once again, we stress the general congruence with the other pairs listed here, especially with the first, 'production mainly for use vs. production mainly for exchange'. The pair 'less industrialised populations vs. more industrialised populations' moves the focus once again, this time to the degree of industrialisation of peoples under study. 'Industrialisation' is used here as a blanket term covering a range of technological and other markers, including, for example, the degree of monetisation. An excellent example of the economic anthropology of a South American industrial proletariat is June Nash's (1993 [1979]) study of Bolivian tin miners, *We eat the mines and the mines eat us*. In this classic ethnography, Nash analyses the social and economic transformations wrought upon Quechua and Aymara Amerindians by industrial tin mining from a Marxian perspective.

The final row in the upper part of the table refers to some key distinctions which operate at the theoretical level. 'Symbolic ecology, cultural ecology' are contrasted to 'informal economy, political economy'. The point of contrast here is mainly concerned with the place of culture: in symbolic and cultural ecology approaches, culture plays a central role as either meaning system or

adaptive epiphenomenon. It plays a much smaller role in studies of the informal economy and in political economy approaches. In the case of cultural ecology and symbolic ecology, we should note that the primary connection with economic anthropology lies in the analysis of people's relationship with their ecological niche: both models rely heavily upon empirical observations of activities such as hunting, fishing, horticulture and resource exploitation in general.

'Cultural ecology' refers to a model that posits a deterministic relationship between culture and the ecological niche occupied by peoples; culture is said to adapt to physical environment. This model has been applied extensively to the economies of forest-dwelling indigenous peoples and *caboclo* populations, and has also been the subject of intense debate, especially among anthropologists working in the Amazonian lowlands. A famous example of this debate is the analysis and explanation of the high propensity for warfare among the Yanomami of the Upper Orinoco region, on the Venezuela–Brazil frontier. The 'economic' perspective, which was in fact largely based on the cultural ecology of Marvin Harris, essentially held that Yanomami warfare had its origins in the overexploitation of the surroundings, which created acute shortages of animal protein. This in turn, ran the argument, led to the development of adaptive behaviour such as warfare, village fissioning and infanticide. (This debate generated a large volume of literature. For a small sample of the various positions, see Chagnon 1979: 910–13; Harris 1974: 102–5, 1984: 183–201.)

'Symbolic ecology' is a theoretical position that attempts to reconcile the materialism of cultural ecology with the ideational framework of symbolism. In other words, it is an effort to simultaneously confront the deficiencies of both overly-deterministic materialism and intellectualist approaches which have become too far removed from lived economic reality: in the context of South America, the most obvious example of this latter tendency would be the structuralism of Claude Lévi-Strauss. Phillipe Descola (who was Lévi-Strauss' student) is the strongest and most articulate advocate of symbolic ecology (this position is presented with clarity in Descola 1996).

'The informal economy' is a term originally used by Keith Hart (1973) to discuss his ethnography of a translocal ethnic community in Accra, Ghana. It 'refers to the mass of economic transactions that takes place beyond effective state regulation' (Hart 1999: 99). It is especially relevant in the South American context, where so much economic activity, both urban and rural, is beyond the gaze of the state. David Cleary argues that in Amazonia, 'the informal economy is considerably more important than the formal, and will remain so' (1993: 342).

'The political economy' as understood here and in most economic anthropology is a slightly confusing term: it does not refer to the original

political economy model propounded most famously and forcibly by Adam Smith, but is shorthand for the critique, mounted by Marx, of this model (there is a vast literature on this critique; a good starting point is Marx 1976). Smith's model embodied certain assumptions, such as the 'economisation' of human labour and relations of production, and the legitimately primordial nature of the capitalist economy, private property and the pursuit of individual gain. Marx's approach was to deconstruct and 'demystify' this model of society and to demonstrate the essentially social nature of all relationships constituting a system of production.

In the context of the economic anthropology of South America, the political economy approach normally involves close scrutiny of relations of production, and the analysis of wages, surplus value and exploitation. Nash's ethnography mentioned above is a model example of this method applied in South American economic anthropology. On the whole, the political economy model has been used most extensively among urban, industrialised or semi-industrialised populations; we can understand this if we consider that Marx conceived it as a way of understanding relations of production in a notably industrial context. Transferring the model out of this context and into, for example, that of a small kinship-based society which achieves self-sufficiency through subsistence hunting and fishing is a challenging though not impossible task.

It is sometimes argued that materialist approaches such as cultural ecology are Marxian in orientation, and that they represent the theoretical gambit of transferring the political economy method from the factory to the forest. There is some merit in this argument, in so far as cultural ecology and Marxian analysis share common territory such as the interrogation of modes of production and resource allocation; however, it is important to understand that, in spite of this overlap, key differences remain. One example of such difference concerns the concepts of power and coercion: a cultural ecology approach seeks to explain these in materialist or economic terms, as in the case of Yanomami warfare described above, in which the exercise of violent power upon other people is explained as the *result* of protein shortages. A Marxian political economy approach looks at the question from the opposite side, arguing that economic systems are *held in place* by structures of power and coercion. Writing of the Waiwai, a Cariban Amerindian society who live in the forested borderlands of southern Guyana and northern Brazil, George Mentore makes one of the more successful efforts to import a genuine political economy approach to a kinship-based, forest-dwelling community. Analysing a spontaneous communal peccary hunt and the subsequent distribution of meat, Mentore demonstrates how the product of the individual hunter's labour is appropriated by the community, and shows that coercion is indeed operative, though cast in terms of kinship morality. He writes: 'The principal

demand of this collective group [the community] is the appropriation of surplus labor which it achieves through the redistribution of the social product; that is, by means of the mechanisms of exchange prescribed in the social relations of kinship' (Mentore 1995: 29). A central assumption which this example shares with the classical political economy model is that successful reproduction of the economic system depends upon the continued appropriation of the individual's surplus labour.

Deriving structure

Reading our schema in this way, row by row, allows us to understand some of the dynamic contrasts and complementary relationships that exist in the economic anthropology of South America. If we now work vertically down through the columns, we can identify two broad patterns which help to impose structure on these sets of themes. The first of these, derived from the left-hand column, has its origins firmly in the anthropology of small-scale, primarily (though not always) indigenous, societies, often physically very remote from urban core areas. It is characterised by a focus upon subsistence livelihoods and the socially-prescribed distribution and consumption of the inalienable products of human labour. Various models have been developed to theorise this material; with certain exceptions such as the political economy example described above, the majority of these models represent examples or transformations of the themes of cultural or symbolic ecology. The second movement, derived from the right-hand column, has its origins in the anthropology of peasant, extractivist and proletarian populations, although it has gradually moved outward from these ethnographic homelands. It is characterised by a focus upon monetised or semi-monetised livelihoods, and the sale or appropriation of human labour and its alienable products. Theoretical models applied to these contexts include variants on the themes of political and informal economy, although, as Mark Harris notes, the economies of *caboclo* and other rural South American populations have historically been discussed in terms of adaptation and cultural ecology (Harris 2000: 14–18).

From structure to transition

The lower part of the table refers to the economic anthropology of South America which reflects the lived reality of *most* South American peoples at the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first. This body of economic anthropology assumes that change – social, political, economic and cultural – defines more than ever before the ways in which people experience the world around them. Specifically, studies of this kind focus on issues such as the articulation of different social, cultural and economic systems, and upon processes of transition, reconstruction and reconfiguration

which such systems are constantly undergoing. We need to emphasise the point that social, cultural and economic change and dynamism are obviously not new phenomena, but processes which have been under way since the peopling of the continent. That said, we must also note that the pace of these processes has by no means been constant, and that different moments in history have witnessed more or less radical forms of transition. Attention to articulation and change is not completely new in South American economic anthropology, but it is certainly true that from the 1970s onwards, these issues moved to the foreground, becoming the subjects of monographs and articles in their own right and ceasing to be relegated to a footnote or final 'Looking to the Future' chapter appended to ethnographies heavily invested in the fiction of economically isolated populations. Here, we shall discuss one such example.

In *The devil and commodity fetishism in South America*, Taussig discusses two transitional populations who have shifted from one economic idiom (a peasant mode of production characterised by balanced reciprocity and collectivism) to another (a capitalist mode of production characterised by economic individualism). The areas which he discusses are the Cauca Valley of Colombia and the tin mines of the Bolivian highlands. We shall consider only the former here. In the Cauca Valley, *campesinos* who once produced goods for their own use and exchange have been absorbed as a proletarian labour force on large agribusiness farms and sugar plantations. To enhance their productivity, upon which their income depends, they make contracts with the Devil, and ritually enact these with an anthropomorphic doll. The money won from these contracts is culturally marked and tainted by the morally ambivalent manner in which it has been gained. It thus cannot be used for productive activities, and is said to be barren. By contrast, *campesinos* on the Pacific coast of Colombia, who have not moved from the peasant to the capitalist mode of production, who do not sell their labour and who control their means of production, use the same doll in their ritual activities, but here it is associated with healing and protection because the underlying relationship with the supernatural is a benevolent one (Taussig 1980: 94–9). Taussig's point is that a shift from cooperative reciprocity to individualistic capitalism has been mirrored by a shift in relations with the supernatural, from benevolence to malevolence. These cultural elaborations represent indigenous critiques of a transition from peasant to capitalist modes of production. The key theoretical focal point here is thus upon movement from one economic idiom to another, and how this shift is played out at the cultural level.

Conclusion

As anthropological theory developed over the course of the twentieth century, associations formed, between geographical areas and the theoretical or

thematic leitmotifs of the discipline. No student of anthropology will fail to connect structural–functionalism and the 'bovine idiom' with the Nuer, nor 'honour and shame' with the Mediterranean. Asked to suggest such a leitmotif for South America, most anthropologists would reply 'structuralism and dual organisation', referring to the pioneering work of Lévi-Strauss, which found its spiritual home in Lowland Amazonian kinship and mythology. The origin narrative of economic anthropology associates it much more intimately with the work done on Pacific cultures, starting with Bronislaw Malinowski's studies of exchange among Trobriand Islanders (Malinowski 1984 [1922]; see Strathern and Stewart chap. 14 supra). With certain notable exceptions, economic anthropology in South America has tended to exist as an element of larger descriptive and interpretative projects, rather than as an end in itself.[3] This recognition should not, however, obscure the fact that important work has been done, and continues to be done, in the economic anthropology of South America. It has been the aim of this chapter to provide the reader with an overview of some of this work, and to offer an interpretative toolkit for further reading in this field.

Notes

1. The terms 'indigenous' and 'Amerindian' are preferred here and used interchangeably. The Spanish/Portuguese *indio/índio* are widely considered pejorative. *Ladino* refers to a person of predominantly Spanish or Portuguese descent. *Mestizo* is taken to signify a person of mixed Spanish/Portuguese and Amerindian descent. *Caboclo* is used to refer to an 'Amazonian peasantry' without a necessarily agrarian subsistence focus (see Lima 1992: ii–iii and *passim*; Nugent 1993: xvii–xx and *passim*). Like social categories everywhere, identities such as the ones used in this chapter are fluid and highly contested. Today, more than ever before, identities such as 'indigenous' and 'non-indigenous' are slippery and politicised; as analytical or ontological categories, it may well be the case that they have outlived their usefulness. They are used here because, for much of the ethnography under discussion, these are important and sustained distinctions.
2. In this sense, we agree with Stephen Hugh-Jones (1992: 44), who notes: 'I do not find it useful or advisable to draw a sharp line between Western capitalism and aboriginal economies as ideal types characterised by opposed pairs such as exchange value/use value'.
3. For an example of South American economic anthropology defined as such, see Stephen Gudeman and Alberto Rivera's excellent *Conversations in Colombia* (1990).

References

Campbell, A. 1995. *Getting to know Waiwai: an Amazonian ethnography*. London: Routledge.
Chagnon, N. 1979. Protein deficiency and tribal war in Amazonia: new data. *Science* 203: 910–13.
Cleary, D. 1993. After the frontier: problems with the political economy in the modern Brazilian Amazon. *Journal of Latin American Studies* 25: 331–49.
Descola, P. 1996. *In the society of nature: a native ecology in Amazonia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Gudeman, S. and A. Rivera 1990. *Conversations in Colombia: the domestic economy in life and text*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Harris, Mark 2000. *Life on the Amazon: the anthropology of a Brazilian peasant village*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Harris, Marvin 1974. *Cows, pigs, wars and witches: the riddles of culture*. New York: Random House.

Harris, Marvin 1984. Animal capture and Yanomamo warfare: retrospect and new evidence. *Journal of Anthropological Research* 40: 183–201.
Hart, K. 1973. Informal income opportunities and urban employment in Ghana. *Journal of Modern African Studies* 11 (1): 61–89.
Hart, K. 1999. *The memory bank: money in an unequal world*. London: Profile Books.
Henley, P. 1982. *The Panare: tradition and change on the Amazonian frontier*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.
Hugh-Jones, S. 1992. Yesterday's luxuries, tomorrow's necessities: business and barter in northwest Amazonia. In *Barter, exchange and value: an anthropological approach* (eds) C. Humphrey and S. Hugh-Jones. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Lima, D. 1992. The social category *caboclo*: history, social organization, identity and outsider's social classification of the rural population of an Amazonian region (the middle Solimões). Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Cambridge.
Malinowski, B. 1984 (1922). *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland.
Marx, K. 1976. *Capital: a critique of political economy*, vol. 1. London: Penguin.
Mentore, G. 1995. Peccary meat and power among the Waiwai Indians of Guyana. *Archaeology and Anthropology* 10: 19–35.
Nash, J. 1993 (1979). *We eat the mines and the mines eat us: dependency and exploitation in Bolivian tin mines*. New York: Columbia University Press.
Nugent, S. 1993. *Amazonian caboclo society: an essay on invisibility and peasant economy*. Oxford: Berg.
Sahlins, M. 1972. *Stone age economics*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
Taussig, M. 1980. *The devil and commodity fetishism in South America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
Taussig, M. 1987. *Shamanism, colonialism and the wild man: a study in terror and healing*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

31 Africa south of the Sahara

Mahir Şaul

The earlier anthropological studies of economy in sub-Saharan Africa were conducted primarily by British scholars, and many were students of Bronislaw Malinowski. A pioneer is Richards, whose library-based thesis on the Bantu peoples of South Africa (1932) advocated Malinowski's 'functional method', with chapters on the 'need for food', household organisation, cattle, the *lobola* system of marriage payments and agriculture. 'Secondary needs' such as political structures followed, and then a comprehensive account of ritual and magic surrounding production. Richards's later fieldwork among the Bemba of Zambia resulted in a better-known book (1939), a touchstone for the description of slash-and-burn or 'swidden' agriculture and its matrilineal setting. She described a rural economy undergoing rapid change and increased migration from countryside to town. In a long, prolific career Mair explored the response in East Africa to new technologies and market, becoming a pioneer of applied anthropology (1934, 1969). Goodfellow initiated a sophisticated reflection on the utility of neoclassical economic notions for Africanist anthropology (1939).

The interest in migration was important in the work of those at the Rhodes–Livingston Institute in Central Africa (Wilson 1942). Godfrey Wilson, its first director, wrote together with his wife Monica on social change (1945; see also M. Wilson 1964 [1936]). Max Gluckman, a later director, studied the Lozi, including a general account of the economy (1941) and essays on property (1943). He analysed the way land was held and the role of descent groups, using Henry Maine's idea of a hierarchy of rights. When he took over the directorship he imprinted his interest in urban and industrial studies, well ahead of his time. He laid down for the researchers of the institute a representative sample of British Central Africa, to assess the effects of labour migration and urbanisation on family and kinship organisation, economic life and political values (Gluckman 1945).

Gluckman, who subsequently moved to Manchester, attracted a number of young researchers interested in social change. Among these, Watson (1958) argued that migration to industrial areas reinforced tribal allegiance rather than undermining it, because claims on rural land were tied to original community and kinship identity. Scudder (1962) described environment and agriculture among the Gwembe Tonga, who were to resettle because of dam construction. Subsequently, Scudder collaborated with Colson to produce a significant body

of longitudinal studies on the Tonga (Colson and Scudder 1988; Scudder and Colson 1978). Turner's (1957) analysis of the Ndembu of Zambia included detailed information on their farming economy. The contribution of Manchester scholars was not limited to Central and Southern Africa. Cohen conducted a seminal study of traders and butchers in Nigeria (1969) and of trade diasporas (1971).

Some important economic work by other British anthropologists was also conducted in Nigeria. Forde, originally a geographer, wrote on ecology and society (1934) and on Yakö economy (1964), and with Scott (Forde and Scott 1946) he undertook a survey of Nigerian small-scale farming that located it in its broader context. Nadel (1942) produced one of the most comprehensive ethnographies in West Africa, focusing on craft specialisation, markets and trade. M.G. Smith (1955) examined the effect of political structure on economic life among the Hausa. Paul Bohannan wrote a description of Tiv farm life in central Nigeria (1954), and then with Laura Bohannan (1958) three sourcebooks for the Human Relations Area Files, the second devoted to subsistence, technology and economics. In two influential articles, Paul Bohannan introduced to Africa the notion of 'spheres of exchange' (see Isaac chap. 1 supra) from Oceania. Most of this was brought together and elaborated in Bohannan and Bohannan (1968), making the Tiv perhaps the best-known case in economic anthropology (see Hart chap. 10 supra).

Marshall Sahlins's influential *Stone age economics* (1972) exemplifies the larger impact of this work. Two chapters on the 'Domestic mode of production' rely greatly on quantified analyses by the authors mentioned above, and on Douglas's (1962) study of the Lele and Woodburn's (1968a, 1968b) of the Hadza. Sahlins's 'Original affluent society' chapter was largely inspired by the finding of an American project that Kalahari foragers spent little time on subsistence (Lee 1979; Lee and DeVore 1968). Also in the United States, Netting (1968) presented a detailed account of a central Nigerian farming system where population growth led to agricultural intensification.

The notion of development cycle of domestic groups is an important contribution of this period. Fortes (1949) linked the pattern of fluctuating membership of domestic groups in two Ghanaian towns to opportunities offered by matrilineal descent and other aleatory factors influencing residence decisions. An edited volume that he oversaw elaborated his basic insight (Goody 1958a; classic chapters are Goody 1958b and Stenning 1958). Elsewhere Goody (1962) discussed inheritance as a factor in religious and economic life in northern Ghana. As well, he (1977) examined the connection between African hoe agriculture and sex-linked property devolution, in contrast to Eurasian plough agriculture, dowry and inheritance by children of both sexes.

Gulliver (1955) made an important contribution to the study of property

management in his work on East African pastoralists. In contrast to the conventional stress on the homestead headed by the husband, he argued that the mother–child unit is critical for production, consumption and inheritance, an argument that remains important in recent debates about the African household (see below). In an edited collection on the same theme (Gray and Gulliver 1964), Gray (1964) presents the transaction of land and money in marriage transactions as the focus of rights and obligations, and criticises the previous scholarly emphasis on structure and legalistic language at the expense of economic exchange, ecological constraint and social process.

The development of cocoa economy in West Africa stimulated pivotal studies. Hill's (1963) pioneering book on Ghana demonstrated how resourceful migrant farmers reinterpret older forms of collaboration to new ends, while Berry (1975, 2001) showed in western Nigeria and in Ghana the social mobility cocoa plantations made possible, but the unequal distribution of its benefits, and the interpenetration of public and private wealth (see also Dupire 1960; Guyer 1980, 1984).

The formalist–substantivist debate in Africa

For many years, Herskovits was the leading figure of both economic anthropology and African studies in the United States. He wrote on the 'cattle complex' (Herskovits 1926) and on the results of his fieldwork in Dahomey, now Benin (1938). However, his reputation as an economic anthropologist was established later, with a textbook published in 1940. A synthetic work of the type produced by many students of Franz Boas, it was presented as an introduction to 'comparative economics', to provide a base for a more universal economic science. His desire to generalise from a broad ethnographic base stands in tension with his desire to draw on the analytic apparatus developed by Alfred Marshall and other formal economists. In the 1950s these two orientations drove economic anthropologists in the United States into two hostile camps, the substantivists and the formalists.

The substantivist position drew most directly on Karl Polanyi, a social critic and economic historian (see Isaac chap. 1 supra). Polanyi's first and most influential book (1944) is an extended commentary on the growth of English laissez-faire capitalism in the eighteenth century and its transformation in Europe at the end of the nineteenth. Polanyi argues that the self-regulating market erodes social life and triumphed only because of coercive measures promoted by an interested elite. Its success provoked social opposition, and may have led to ruinous outcomes if market forces had not been reined in. Polanyi stressed that in Britain the Crown often slowed the devastation visited by the parliament; this idea of the monarch as proxy for society is echoed in his later work on archaic kingdoms (Polanyi 1966; his chapters in Polanyi, Arensberg and Pearson 1957). This work presented models of two sorts of

non-market economic organisation; reciprocity, modelled on Malinowski's Melanesia ethnography, and redistribution, illustrated with Babylon and ancient Egypt but also related to feudalism.

The ways that economies can be integrated in the absence of markets was further explored in a large interdisciplinary project that he led (Polanyi, Arensberg and Pearson 1957). In this book only two contributions (on Dahomey: Arnold 1957a, 1957b) concern sub-Saharan Africa, but Polanyi's views shaped the other contributions on archaic and pre-Columbian empires. In his final years, Polanyi drew on Herskovits and on historical accounts by European Atlantic traders in work that focused on Dahomey (1966), which he presented as a kingdom with bureaucracy, administered trade, central planning and exchange rates fixed by royal decree.

Anthropologists became familiar with Polanyi's views through Dalton (1961), who was an economist by training but a frequent contributor to anthropology journals. Dalton conducted research in Liberia and published on economic development, but his anthropology publications are programmatic, with examples selected from the works of other ethnographers. His substantivist allies were Paul Bohannan and a number of young admirers of Polanyi. Although many shared Polanyi's political sympathies, his prophetic voice quickly gave way to more innocuous academic propositions, the clearest of which was that one could not apply formal economic theory to non-Western societies.

The substantivists' most important collective endeavour on Africa was a volume on markets edited by Bohannan and Dalton (1962). Two of Polanyi's ideas were central: marketplaces and trade could exist in a society without a 'market principle' regulating prices and factor allocation; there is a distinction between 'all-purpose' money, which cumulates the functions of exchange, payment and standard, and many historical currencies that served only one or two of these purposes. Bohannan used 'all-purpose' and 'special-purpose' in a distinctive way, to fit his model of spheres of exchange: African moneys were special purpose in that they could be exchanged only against a limited range of goods (for this legacy as a mixed blessing, see Şaul 2004).[1]

Schneider, a student of Herskovits, was one of the leading formalists. After early work among the Nilotic pastoralist Pokot in Kenya, he established fame with publications on the Wanyaturu farmers of Tanzania (1970). Besides providing a wealth of meticulous data, he argued against the substantivists' communalistic view of economy and society, which de-emphasised selfish motives, and instead stressed conflict and competition. He proclaimed that formal economic theory could be applied to Africa.

A close reading of formalist publications reveals that they felt affinity with the broader generational rebellion in British anthropology against structural

functionalism (to which the US substantivists were assimilated) and in favour of the study of negotiation, change and conflict. In the late 1960s, two popular readers appeared that represented the two rival camps. One, edited by Dalton (1967), included eight chapters on Africa; the other, edited by LeClair and Schneider (1968), included five.

Although the dispute is commonly called the formalist–substantivist debate, the two camps were internally heterogeneous and were speaking past each other. For instance, the substantivists included principled opponents of neoclassical economics (institutionalists, quasi-Marxists), more woolly comparativists and culturalists who were moving from empiricism to idealism and anti-theory. These strands co-existed in Dalton's work, but he made the unobjectionable point that in those parts of Africa where land and labour were not commercialised, much neoclassical analysis had little utility. For Bohannan the issue was simply that anthropologists did not ask the same questions as economists (quoted in Dalton 1961: 12). In polemic, however, few distinguished between the variety of economic theories and schools or levels of analysis. Anthropologists may have been attracted to formalism because they felt 'naked before their mathematically padded colleagues', the economists (Dalton 1968: xxxix); a second factor was the political strength of free-trade conservatism; a third factor was that, for some, formalism implied greater respect for 'the native'.

While the debate was central to economic anthropology in the United States, it was largely ignored in Britain. Raymond Firth's students, who continued Malinowski's actor-oriented anthropology, sided implicitly with the formalists, as did the historians who criticised Polanyi and Bohannan. Frederick Barth (1967), going further, wedded Bohannan's idea of 'spheres of exchange' to 'entrepreneurship', showing how obstacles to conversion between spheres in southern Sudan stimulated the desire to overcome them for gain, leading to changes in the spheres. In a way, 'new institutional economics' (Ensminger 1992), premised on rational choice but focusing on market constraints using game theory, also bypasses the formalist–substantivist opposition.

Marxism

While Marxist ideas have long influenced economic anthropology, in the 1970s Marxist vocabulary gained greater currency (see Robotham chap. 3 supra). A group of French scholars provided the impetus, their impact in the English-speaking world was mediated by young British anthropologists (especially in the journal *Critique of Anthropology*). The pioneer was Claude Meillassoux who, following fieldwork in Côte d'Ivoire, set forth his major insights in a widely quoted article (Meillassoux 1978 [1960]). His account of African farm communities focused on self-provisioning and a hierarchy that

had senior men at the apex and junior men the bottom, with women being a subordinate side group with its own internal hierarchy. Senior men's authority was based on technical and ritual knowledge; young men were dependent on them because senior men controlled access to the prestige goods necessary to acquire wives. Meillassoux argued that, in these communities, the reproductive role of women was more important than their labour power. He also considered how this economy could absorb limited commercial exchange. A monograph on the Gouro followed (Meillassoux 1964) and he developed his theoretical reflection in a further volume (1981 [1975]). Meillassoux was inspired by the Bohannans, and through them British social anthropology, and expressed sympathy for Polanyi against the formalists. The bridge he established to Marxism, the themes of conflict between elders and juniors and men and women, and the political aspect of the circulation of wealth objects, found enthusiastic audience among a younger generation of Africanists.

Important in the revival of Marxist thought in Europe in the 1960s was the concept of the 'mode of production', a label for the relation between productive resources and classes and the flow of products from one class to another. An important aspect of this was a debate on the 'Asiatic mode of production', described in Karl Marx's writings on India and Russia and now added to the standard list (ancient, Germanic, feudal and capitalist). One early product of this debate to reach English-speaking anthropologists was a paper by Dupré and Rey (1968). Writing for theoretical clarification during fieldwork in the Congo, they start with an extended critique of the substantivists for setting out 'marketless society' in contrast to capitalism, in the absence of a satisfactory theoretical treatment. Then they provide a synoptic history of four centuries of relations between Congo societies and Europe, from the slave trade to colonisation. It is remarkably bold and original, showing that African social and economic organisation did not dissolve with increasing European contact, but was transformed as the political needs of the Congolese elite changed in response to changing European merchant interests. Their work draws on Meillassoux, but goes beyond him with a more profound historical understanding and a greater attention to class conflicts. Perhaps the most significant contribution of their work was the notion of 'articulation' between a 'lineage mode' and the capitalist mode of production.

Rey (1971) amplified these themes in a seminal monograph, packed with ethnographic and historical information and ranging freely over a wide variety of theoretical subjects. Instead of constructing an ideal pre-colonial past, he focuses on colonial dislocation. In later work, he (1973) elaborated on the phases of 'articulation', arguing that during colonial transition traditional authorities were complicit in drawing young men to markets and wage labour. An acclaimed review article by Foster-Carter (1978) assessed Rey's

work and its impact in Britain, where the dependency school ruled (see Eades 'Anthropology, political economy and world-system theory' chap. 2 supra).

Meillassoux's ethnography also inspired an extended commentary by Terray (1972 [1969]), which re-examines production and consumption units with a new rigour, partly inspired by Rey. For Hart (1982: 187), this was 'the best single essay to have emerged from French Marxist anthropology'. For Terray, kinship is shaped by influences from three areas of social life: forms of cooperation in production, juridico-political rules, ideology. He greatly refines the idea that kinship is dominant in this mode of production by taking kinship to be an element in the realisation of the mode of production. As well, he argues against Rey's view that elders exploit juniors. (In his ethnographic work, he explored pre-colonial class and exploitation among Abron military leaders, slaves and Jula traders in Côte d'Ivoire; Terray 1975.)

Meillassoux rejected Rey's idea of articulation and the usefulness of mode of production analysis for his African material. He went on to conduct fieldwork in Mali, as well as more historical analysis. In 1970 and in 1971 he organised two series of colloquia in Paris. The first was on commerce (resulting in Meillassoux 1971); the second was on slavery (resulting in Meillassoux 1975). Besides the great richness of individual contributions, Meillassoux's introductions to these collections demonstrate his masterly control of the sweep of West African history.

These contributions changed the anthropological landscape. Conflict between generations, between men and women and between classes became more important. As well, ethnography became more concerned with history and colonisation. These themes also featured in the rise of the intra-household and gender literature (see below). One important consequence of Marxist debates for US economic anthropology was to defuse the substantivist–formalist debate, making it clear that it was important to develop an analytical apparatus that could deal with all sorts of economies. Donham (1981) proclaimed the end of the opposition between formalists and substantivists, a proclamation followed by monographs supplying more data and analysis on southern Ethiopia to substantiate the point (Donham 1985, 1990). However, the bulk of French ethnographic work that inspired the debates remained little known in the English-speaking world. Terray's monumental thesis on the Abron is unpublished; reference to his book (Terray 1969) is rare, as is reference to Meillassoux's publications on Mali (for example, 1968, 1970, 1991 [1986]), to Olivier de Sardan's ethnography in Niger (1969, 1984) and to Dupré's brilliant monographs on the Nzabi and Beembe (1982, 1985), works which represent high points in the field.

Household and gender

African anthropology has contributed significantly to the interdisciplinary

study of household and gender since the 1970s, a contribution that contains substantial concern with economy. One input came from kinship studies. The keen analysis of interpersonal relations associated with the developmental cycle idea alerted critics to extra-domestic ties and to limits on the scope of the conjugal bond. Cases where spouses maintain interests and claims to property in joint ventures beyond the household, where they undertake only limited production and consumption together, or where they do not even live together, are more common in sub-Saharan Africa than elsewhere and gave feminist scholarship a sharpened analytic awareness. With growing confidence, Africanists challenged the joint-household utility models of neoclassical economics and the 'peasant household' (see Harriss chap. 33 infra).

The interest in conflict and negotiation between spouses and between generations was reinforced by the debates that Meillassoux, Terray and Rey stimulated. This influence is easily missed today, because initially Meillassoux drew more criticism than praise for blurring social and biological reproduction and for failing to elaborate on women's subordination (Harris and Young 1981; O'Laughlin 1977). The contribution comes to light in two outstanding literature reviews: Guyer's (1981), which establishes continuity with mainstream anthropology, and Moore's (1988: chaps 3, 4), which places the debate within feminism.

Husbands' claims over wives' labour, often limited to specified activities, may expand or contract with struggle or negotiation under changing circumstances, but regional patterns appear to have remarkable continuity. Hill (1969, 1972), writing on northern Nigeria, and Dupire (1960), writing on cocoa and coffee planters of Côte d'Ivoire, describe in detail the implications of spouses maintaining separate estates. Moreover, this pattern is not limited to West Africa (for a Muslim area in Tanzania, see Caplan 1984). That spouses engage separately in production does not imply equal access to resources. When dependants have private fields, women may have to work both in their husband's and their household's fields before they can turn to their own (Berry 1985). In the Ghana cocoa belt, food grown by women seems to complement men's cash crops or migration, but some women choose to live separately (Bukh 1979). Guyer (1980) explores the factors accounting for the contrast between Ghana and Nigeria in the historical development of women growing food and men cash crops. In Kampala, village wives bring food to the city and take back money, they grow independent, while men are ambivalent about successful women (Obbo 1980).

Some compelling urban research has been conducted in Ghana. In Accra, women choose to remain single and possess considerable freedom (Dinan 1977). Sanjek's (1982) study of a suburb of Accra is not important only for its findings, but also for its methodological orientation. It starts with the set of co-residents, and examines the functions performed within it and members' links

to those outside the set. This brings out details and relationships that tend to be obscured by those using the sort of demographic techniques elaborated for the study of European societies. A collection with a good representation of West African women scholars explores the collaboration and separation of spouses in changing circumstances (Oppong 1983). Another collection brings together contributions by historians and anthropologists on urban women in different parts of Africa (Hafkin and Bay 1976).

For the colonial period, Etienne (1977) argued that women lost ground among the Baule of Côte d'Ivoire, because men and women started producing different crops that were not commercialised to the same extent. Migration also can affect men and women differently. In a historical study of kinship in Lesotho, Murray (1981) finds female-headed households increasing and agriculture becoming more feminised. Female-headed households are not necessarily poor, however, as Peters (1983) shows in a critique of research on women in Botswana, and urban migration can be a response to better opportunities (Izzard 1985). One of the gains of the 1970s was breaking down the category 'women', assumed to have lost ground uniformly because of colonisation. Instead, some women did well during colonialism and after independence (Guyer 1984; Stone 1988).

Trade

The study of trade and markets, primarily in West Africa,[2] has had influence well beyond those concerned only with the subcontinent. One aspect of these studies, Hart's (1973) notion of the 'informal economy', is probably the most visible contribution by economic anthropology to international research and policy making.

In the last two decades, studies of commerce have taken a more historical approach or turned to transnational linkages. One edited volume by Guyer (1987) explores the grain trade since colonial times and another one (Guyer 1995) traces the legacy of the Atlantic encounter between West Africa and Europe. Robertson (1984) offers a panorama of Ga women's economic participation in Accra, growing sex segregation giving women autonomy and strength in the colonial period, but eroding now with class differentiation and the reassertion of male authority through wealth. Clark's (1994) impressive study of the Kumasi market in Ghana shows how heterogeneous groups coalesce without necessarily sharing all interests, and how gender and ethnic transmission of skill and wealth accounts for the present configuration of trade networks and marketplaces. She shows that market women generally lost capital, although some benefited from the competition for relative position and privileged access to sources of supply.

A set of French works known as *anthropologie de l'entreprise*, focusing on the distribution of consumer goods, deserves better recognition in the English-

speaking world. Cordonnier's (1982) study of Togolese women cloth wholesalers was the forerunner of these works. They belong to the coastal trade bourgeoisie, whose better-educated men were in civil service jobs or politics. Gender stereotyping benefits the richest women, for example in not having to keep formal accounts, which results in lower taxes. Another work, by Labazée (1988) on well-known businessmen in colonial and post-colonial Burkina Faso, started a trend. In a special issue of *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines* Labazée (1991) presented another set of articles, including his own on the rich women traders called 'Nana Benz' in Lome, and Grégoire's (1991) on the smuggling between the port of Benin, Niger and Nigeria (see also Collins 1976). Some contributions link seemingly-wasteful ostentatious spending to access to resources, an argument also made more broadly for the evolution of southern Nigerian economy (in Berry 1985).

Important work also focuses on trade diasporas and cross-border trade (Grégoire and Labazée 1993). For example, Lambert's (1993) study of women traders on the Dakar–Bamako railroad line shows the oldest and wealthiest among them providing organisation and protection for the weak, but also obstructing their growth. An important feature of this work is that it rejects the distinction between formal and informal economic spheres, arguing that the state and cross-border trade affect all sectors of the economy. As well, it makes use of biographic case studies to better describe social and economic linkages and historical trends.

Transnational trade is at centre stage in Steiner's book (1994) on African art objects in the global marketplace, which emphasises African participants. MacGaffey and a set of collaborators (MacGaffey et al. 1991) published an unconventional study of smuggling and other income-generating activities in Mobutu's Congo. Similarly, Little (2003) studied Somalia in the early 1990s, when the state had collapsed, and shows how an economy can thrive on cross-border smuggling. An equally original study followed on the two-way trade between the two Congos and Europe by various individuals, including airline employees, church members, former students and high-fashion dandies (MacGaffey and Bazenguisa-Ganga 2000).

Conclusion

As this chapter shows, sub-Saharan Africa has been an important region for economic anthropologists since the early decades of the twentieth century. Issues significant in the sub-discipline, and indeed in the discipline as a whole, have emerged from work in the region, and some of these have gone on to influence broader international policy making. In this chapter, work in the region has been presented in terms of a distinct set of issues. However, it is important to remember that, underlying the differences between them, they are united by a common recognition that economic activities, processes and

structures can be understood only by attending to their links with the social, cultural and political fields in which they exist.

Notes

1. A more recent comparative work by Shipton (1989), grounded in Kenyan ethnography, provided a somewhat different perspective on the kinds of restrictions that can be imposed in spending money. Shipton pointed to a belief that retribution will befall people using money that has been procured in disapproved of ways (the sale of ancestral land and gold, some cash crops sales, criminal activity) in livestock and bridewealth transactions. This kind of moral check on circulation can be contrasted to 'special-purpose money', in either Polanyi's or Bohannan's senses, in its political effects. An edited collection returns to the theme that money and trade can be present without capitalism (Parry and Bloch 1989).
2. In addition to the work of Nadel, Cohen and Meillassoux, mentioned already, see Hill (1966, 1970), Hodder and Ukwu (1969), Little (1973) and Sudarkasa (1973); an important work from beyond West Africa is Gray and Birmingham (1970).

References

Arnold, R. 1957a. A port of trade: Whydah on the Guinea coast. In *Trade and market in the early empires* (eds) K. Polanyi, C. Arensberg and H. Pearson. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press.

Arnold, R. 1957b. Separation of trade and market: Great Market of Whydah. In *Trade and market in the early empires* (eds) K. Polanyi, C. Arensberg and H. Pearson. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press.

Barth, F. 1967. Economic spheres in Darfur. In *Themes in economic anthropology* (ed.) R. Firth. London: Tavistock.

Berry, S. 1975. *Cocoa, custom, and socio-economic change in rural western Nigeria*. Oxford: Clarendon.

Berry, S. 1985. *Fathers work for their sons: accumulation, mobility, and class formation in an extended Yorùbá community*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Berry, S. 2001. *Chiefs know their boundaries: essays on property, power, and the past in Asante, 1896–1996*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Bohannan, P. 1954. *Tiv farm and settlement*. London: HMSO.

Bohannan, P. and L. Bohannan 1958. *Three source notebooks in Tiv ethnography*. New Haven, Conn.: Human Relations Area File.

Bohannan, P. and L. Bohannan 1968. *Tiv economy*. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press.

Bohannan, P. and G. Dalton (eds) 1962. *Markets in Africa*. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press. (A selection of eight chapters and the introduction was published separately: 1965. *Markets in Africa: eight subsistence economies in transition.* Garden City, NY: Doubleday and American Museum of Natural History.)

Bukh, J. 1979. *The village woman in Ghana*. Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies.

Caplan, P. 1984. Cognatic descent, Islamic law and women's property on the East African coast. In *Women and property – women as property* (ed.) R. Hirschon. London: Croom Helm.

Clark, G. 1994. *Onions are my husband: survival and accumulation by West African market women*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Cohen, A. 1969. *Custom and politics in urban Africa*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Cohen, A. 1971. Cultural strategies in the organization of trading diasporas. In *The development of indigenous trade and markets in West Africa* (ed.) C. Meillassoux. London: Oxford University Press.

Collins, J.D. 1976. The clandestine movement of groundnuts across the Niger–Nigeria boundary. *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 10: 259–78.

Colson, E. and T. Scudder 1988. *For prayer and profit: the ritual, economic, and social importance of beer in Gwembe District, Zambia, 1950–1982*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Cordonnier, R. 1982. *Femmes africaines et commerce, les revendeuses de tissues de la ville de Lome*. Paris: ORSTOM.

Dalton, G. 1961. Economic theory and primitive society. *American Anthropologist* 63: 1–25.

Dalton, G. (ed.) 1967. *Tribal and peasant economies: readings in economic anthropology*. Garden City, NY: Natural History Press.
Dalton, G. 1968. Introduction. In *Primitive, archaic and modern economies: essays of Karl Polanyi*, K. Polanyi. Boston, Mass.: Beacon.
Dinan, C. 1977. Pragmatists or feminists: the professional single women of Accra. *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 19: 155–76.
Donham, D.L. 1981. Beyond the domestic mode of production. *Man* (n.s.) 16: 515–41.
Donham, D.L. 1985. *Work and power in Maale, Ethiopia*. Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Research Press.
Donham, D.L. 1990. *History, power, ideology: central issues in Marxism and anthropology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Douglas, M. 1962. Lele economy as compared with the Bushong. In *Markets in Africa* (eds) G. Dalton and P. Bohannan. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press.
Dupire, M. 1960. Planteurs autochtones et étrangers en Basse-Côte d'Ivoire orientale. *Études Eburnéennes* (Abidjan) 8: 7–237.
Dupré, G. 1982. *Un Ordre et sa destruction*. Paris: ORSTOM.
Dupré, G. 1985. *Les Naissances d'une société: espace et historicité chez les Beembe du Congo*. Paris: ORSTOM.
Dupré, G. and P.-P. Rey 1968. Réflexions sur la pertience d'une théorie de l'histoire des échanges. *Cahiers internationaux de sociologie* 46: 133–62. (Published in English in 1973 as Reflections on the relevance of a theory of the history of exchange. *Economy and Society* 2: 131–63; which was reprinted in 1978 in *Relations of production* (ed.) D. Seddon. London: Frank Cass.)
Ensminger, J. 1992. *Making a market: the institutional transformation of an African society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Etienne, M. 1977. Women and men, cloth and colonization. *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 17: 41–64.
Forde, C.D. 1934. *Habitat, economy and society: a geographical introduction to ethnology*. London: Methuen.
Forde, C.D. 1964. *Yakö studies*. London: Oxford University Press.
Forde, C.D. and R. Scott 1946. *The native economies of Nigeria*. London: HMSO.
Fortes, M. 1949. Time and social structure: an Ashanti case study. In *Social structure: essays presented to A.R. Radcliffe-Brown* (ed.) M. Fortes. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (Reprinted in M. Fortes 1970. *Time and social structure and other essays*. London: Athlone.)
Foster-Carter, A. 1978. The mode of production controversy. *New Left Review* 107: 47–78. (Reprinted in 1978 as Can we articulate 'articulation'? In *The new economic anthropology* (ed.) J. Clammer. New York: St. Martin's Press.)
Gluckman, M. 1941. *Economy of the Central Barotse Plain*. Livingston: Rhodes–Livingston Institute.
Gluckman, M. 1943. *Essays on Lozi land and royal property*. Livingston: Rhodes–Livingston Institute.
Gluckman, M. 1945. The seven year research plan of the Rhodes–Livingston Institute. *Journal of the Rhodes–Livingston Institute* 4: 1–32.
Goodfellow, D.M. 1939. *Principles of economic sociology: the economics of primitive life as illustrated from the Bantu peoples of South and East Africa*. London: Routledge.
Goody, J. (ed.) 1958a. *The developmental cycle in domestic groups.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Goody, J. 1958b. The fission of domestic groups among the Lo Dagaba. In *The developmental cycle in domestic groups* (ed.) J. Goody. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Goody, J. 1962. *Death, property and the ancestors.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Goody, J. 1977. *Production and reproduction.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Gray, R.F. 1964. Introduction. In *The family estate in Africa: studies in the role of property in family structure and lineage continuity* (eds) R.F. Gray and P.H. Gulliver. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
Gray, R.F. and D. Birmingham (eds) 1970. *Pre-colonial African trade*. London: Oxford University Press.

Gray, R.F. and P.H. Gulliver (eds) 1964. *The family estate in Africa: studies in the role of property in family structure and lineage continuity.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
Grégoire, E. 1991. Les Chemins de la contrebande: études des réseaux commerciaux en pays hausa. *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 31: 509–32.
Grégoire, E. and P. Labazée (eds) 1993. *Grands Commerçants d'Afrique de l'Ouest: logiques et pratiques d'un groupe d'hommes d'affaires contemporains.* Paris: Karthala.
Gulliver, P.H. 1955. *The family herds: a study of two pastoral tribes in East Africa, the Jie and Turkana.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
Guyer, J. 1980. Food, coca, and the division of labor by sex in two West African societies. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 22: 355–73.
Guyer, J. 1981. Household and community in African studies. *African Studies Review* 24 (2/3): 87–137.
Guyer, J. 1984. *Family and farm in southern Cameroon.* Boston, Mass.: African Studies Center, Boston University.
Guyer, J. (ed.) 1987. *Feeding African cities: studies in regional social history*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, for the International African Institute.
Guyer, J. (ed.) 1995. *Money matters.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
Hafkin, N.J. and E.G. Bay 1976. *Women in Africa: studies in social and economic change*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Harris, O. and K. Young 1981. Engendered structures: some problems in the analysis of reproduction. In *The anthropology of pre-capitalist societies* (eds) J. Kahn and J. Llobera. London: Macmillan.
Hart, K. 1973. Informal income opportunities and urban employment in Ghana. *Journal of Modern African Studies* 11 (3): 61–89.
Hart, K. 1982. *The political economy of West African agriculture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Herskovits, M.J. 1926. The cattle complex in East Africa. *American Anthropologist* 28: 230–72, 361–88, 494–528, 633–64.
Herskovits, M.J. 1938. *Dahomey: an ancient West African kingdom*. New York: J.J. Augustin.
Herskovits, M.J. 1940. *The economic life of primitive people.* New York: Knopf. (Revised and retitled as 1952. *Economic anthropology*. New York: Knopf.)
Hill, P. 1963. *The migrant cocoa farmers of southern Ghana*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Hill, P. 1966. Landlords and brokers. *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 6: 349–66.
Hill, P. 1969. Hidden trade in Hausaland. *Man* (n.s.) 4: 392–409.
Hill, P. 1970. *Studies in rural capitalism in West Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Hill, P. 1972. *Rural Hausa: a village and a setting.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Hodder, H.B. and U.I. Ukwu 1969. *Markets in West Africa.* Ibadan: Ibadan University Press.
Izzard, W. 1985. Migrants and mothers: case-studies from Botswana. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 11: 258–80.
Labazée, P. 1988. *Entreprises et entrepreneurs du Burkina Faso: vers un lecture anthropologique de l'entreprise africaine.* Paris: Karthala.
Labazée, P. (ed.) 1991. *L'Anthropologie de l'entreprise*. *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 24 (special issue).
Lambert, A. 1993. Les Commerçantes maliennes du chemin de fer Dakar-Bamako. In *Grands Commerçants d'Afrique de l'Ouest: logiques et pratiques d'un groupe d'hommes d'affaires contemporains* (eds) E. Grégoire and P. Labazée. Paris: Karthala.
LeClair, Jr, E.E. and H.K. Schneider (eds) 1968. *Economic anthropology: readings in theory and analysis.* New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
Lee, R.B. 1979. *The !Kung San: men, women, and work in a foraging society.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Lee, R.B. and I. DeVore (eds) 1968. *Man the hunter.* Chicago: Aldine.
Little, K. 1973. *African women in towns.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Little, P.D. 2003. *Economy without state*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
MacGaffey, J. with V. Mukchya, M. ma Mavambu ye Beda, B.G. Schoepf, R. wa Nkera and

W. Engundu 1991. *The real economy of Zaire: the contribution of smuggling and other activities to national wealth.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
MacGaffey, J. and R. Bazenguissa-Ganga 2000. *Congo-Paris: transnational traders on the margins of law*. Oxford: James Currey.
Mair, Lucy P. 1934. *An African people in the twentieth century*. London: Routledge.
Mair, Lucy P. 1969. *Anthropology and social change*. London: Athlone.
Meillassoux, C. 1964. *Anthropologie économique des Gouro de Côte d'Ivoire*. Paris: Mouton.
Meillassoux, C. 1968. Les Cérémonies septennales du Kamablõ de Kaaba (Mali) (5–12 April 1968). *Journal de la Société des Africanistes* 38: 173–83.
Meillassoux, C. 1970. A class analysis of the bureaucratic process in Mali. *Journal of Development Studies* 6: 97–110.
Meillassoux, C. (ed.) 1971. *The development of indigenous trade and markets in West Africa.* London: Oxford University Press.
Meillassoux, C. (ed.) 1975. *L'Esclavage en Afrique précoloniale*. Paris: Maspero.
Meillassoux, C. 1978 (1960). 'The economy' in agricultural self-sustaining societies: a preliminary analysis. In *Relations of production: Marxist approaches to economic anthropology* (ed.) D. Seddon. London: Frank Cass.
Meillassoux, C. 1981 (1975). *Maidens, meal and money*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Meillassoux, C. 1991 (1986). *Anthropology of slavery: the womb of iron and gold*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Moore, H.L. 1988. *Feminism and anthropology.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
Murray, C. 1981. *Families divided: the impact of migrant labour in Lesotho.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Nadel, S. 1942. *A black Byzantium: the kingdom of Nupe in Nigeria.* London: Oxford University Press.
Netting, R. McC. 1968. *Hill farmers of Nigeria: cultural ecology of the Kofyar of the Jos Plateau.* Seattle: University of Washington Press.
Obbo, C. 1980. *African women: their struggle for economic independence.* London: Zed Press.
O'Laughlin, B. 1977. Production and reproduction: Meillassoux's *Femmes, greniers et capitaux. Critique of Anthropology* 2 (8): 3–32.
Olivier de Sardan, J.-P. 1969. *Système des relations économiques et sociales chez les Wogo (Niger)*. Paris: Institut d'Ethnologie.
Olivier de Sardan, J.-P. 1984. *Les Sociétés Songhay-Zarma (Niger-Mali): chefs, guerriers, esclaves, paysans … .* Paris: Karthala.
Oppong, C. (ed.) 1983. *Female and male in West Africa.* London: George Allen & Unwin.
Parry, J. and M. Bloch (eds) 1989. *Money and the morality of exchange*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Peters, P.E. 1983. Gender, development cycles and historical process: a critique of recent research on women in Botswana. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 10: 100–122.
Polanyi, K. 1944. *The great transformation: the political and economic origins of our time*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
Polanyi, K. 1966. *Dahomey and the slave trade.* Seattle: University of Washington Press.
Polanyi, K., C. Arensberg and H. Pearson (eds) 1957. *Trade and market in the early empires*. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press.
Rey, P.-P. 1971. *Colonialism, néo-colonialism et transition au capitalisme: exemple de la 'Camilog' au Congo-Brazaville.* Paris: Maspero.
Rey, P.-P. 1973. *Les Alliances de classe*. Paris: Maspero.
Richards, A.I. 1932. *Hunger and work in a savage tribe: a functional study of nutrition among the Southern Bantu.* London: George Routledge & sons.
Richards, A.I. 1939. *Land, labour and diet in Northern Rhodesia: an economic study of the Bemba tribe*. London: Oxford University Press.
Robertson, C. 1984. *Sharing the same bowl: a socioeconomic history of women and class in Accra, Ghana*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
Sahlins, M. 1972. *Stone age economics.* Chicago: Aldine de Gruyter.

Sanjek, R. 1982. The organization of households in Adabraka: toward a wider comparative perspective. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 24: 57–103.
Şaul, M. 2004. Money in colonial transition: cowries and francs in West Africa. *American Anthropologist* 106: 71–84.
Schneider, H.K. 1970. *The Wahi Wanyaturu: economics in an African society.* New York: Viking Fund Publications in Anthropology.
Scudder, T. 1962. *The ecology of the Gwembe Tonga.* Manchester: Manchester University Press.
Scudder, T. and E. Colson 1978. Long term field research in Gwembe Valley, Zambia. In *Long term field research in anthropology* (eds) G.M. Foster, T. Scudder, E. Colson and R.V. Kemper. New York: Academic Press.
Shipton, P. 1989. *Bitter money: cultural economy and some African meanings of forbidden commodities.* Washington, DC: American Ethnological Society.
Smith, M.G. 1955. *The economy of the Hausa communities of Zaria.* London: HMSO.
Steiner, C.B. 1994. *African art in transit.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Stenning, D.L. 1958. Household viability among the pastoral Fulani. In *The developmental cycle in domestic groups* (ed.) J. Goody. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Stone, M.P. 1988. Women doing well: a restudy of the Nigerian Kofyar. *Research in Economic Anthropology* 10: 287–306.
Sudarkasa, N. 1973. *Where women work: a study of Yoruba women in the marketplace and in the home.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
Terray, E. 1969. *L'Organisation sociale des Dida de Côte d'Ivoire.* Dijon: Darantière.
Terray, E. 1972 (1969). Historical materialism and segmentary lineage-based societies. In *Marxism and 'primitive' societies*, E. Terray. New York: Monthly Review Press.
Terray, E. 1975. Class and class consciousness in the Abron Kingdom of Gyaman. In *Marxist analyses and social anthropology* (ed.) M. Bloch. London: Malaby.
Turner, V. 1957. *Schism and continuity in an African society: a study of Ndembu village life*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
Watson, W. 1958. *Tribal cohesion in a money economy: a study of the Mambwe people of Northern Rhodesia.* Manchester: Manchester University Press.
Wilson, G. 1942. *The economics of detribalization in Northern Rhodesia*. Livingston: Rhodes–Livingston Institute.
Wilson, G. and M. Wilson 1945. *The analysis of social change based on observations in Central Africa*. London: Cambridge University Press.
Wilson, M. 1964 (1936). *Reaction to conquest: effects of contact with Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa*. London: Oxford University Press.
Woodburn, J. 1968a. An introduction to Hadza ecology. In *Man the hunter* (eds) R. Lee and L. DeVore. Chicago: Aldine.
Woodburn, J. 1968b. Stability and flexibility in Hadza residential groupings. In *Man the hunter* (eds) R. Lee and L. DeVore. Chicago: Aldine.

32 The Near East

Julia Elyachar

Economic anthropology of the Near East is a subfield waiting to exist. Of 213 listings under the heading 'economic anthropology' in the Library of Congress system, there are only two books that deal with the Near East (Manger 1984; Tully 1988). Similarly, there were only five articles on the Near East published in the journal *Research in Economic Anthropology* between 1978 and 2002. The lack of articles on the Near East in recent important collections in economic anthropology is also striking (Appadurai 1986; Hann 1998; Humphrey and Hugh-Jones 1992; Parry and Bloch 1989).[1] This lack of attention to the Near East in economic anthropology, or the lack of attention to economic anthropology among scholars of the Near East, is particular noteworthy in a period where the region was often at the centre of attention of global political concerns, for better or worse.

The Near East has traditionally been associated with three theoretical concerns in anthropology: Islam, segmentation and the harem (Abu-Lughod 1989). That limited focus has now changed somewhat, but Abu-Lughod's statement (1989: 299) that 'economic anthropology has hardly been done in the Middle East' remains true. In political discourse as well as in anthropology, the Near East is still stereotyped as a place where religion, honour and family are more important than economy or the market. The old 'zones of theory' in anthropology of the Near East (Abu-Lughod 1989) still seem to hold fast. In our publications, if not in our thinking, the region appears to be a place where economic anthropology is not relevant.

This is not to say that there is no research conducted in the Near East on topics central to economic anthropology. But writing on markets, exchange and property in the region is often embedded in ethnographies with different sub-disciplinary homes. The concerns of some of the profession's most famous names include economic anthropology of the Near East – by some definitions of the region, at least (for example, Bourdieu 1965, 1977; Geertz 1962, 1963, 1968). Scholars known for anthropology of Islam have written important works related to the economic anthropology of the region (Asad 1973; Eickelman 1983; Eickelman and Piscatori 1990; Gilsenan 1996). But that work, some of it influential, does not coalesce into a visible body of research. On the other hand, scholars who do regularly carry out work in this subfield are rarely located in prestigious universities, published in prestigious journals or (in relevant cases) translated into English.

Foundations

Economic anthropology of the Near East faces a few foundational dilemmas. The first is geographical, and thus political as well. Where, and what, is the Near East? In the French anthropological tradition, research focuses heavily on North Africa and the former French colonies. In the American tradition, the Near East is construed in terms of US hegemony after the Second World War, centred around US foreign policy concerns in Israel and the oil rich countries of the Gulf. The Near East is often assumed, in the United States in particular, to be the same as 'the Muslim World'. But many non-Muslims live in the Near East, and most Muslims in the world live elsewhere. For the purposes of this chapter, I shall include works on the Arab Near East, including North Africa, and I shall review only materials published (if not necessarily originally written) in English.

The Near East is a region where long-standing assumptions in the social sciences can be fruitfully challenged. It was globalised long before globalisation; circuits of migration for pilgrimage and labour have inscribed the region since the rise of Islam; markets are highly monetised and have been for millennia. The long history of cities, markets and complex economies in the region might suggest a context where economics rather than economic anthropology would be the dominant theoretical paradigm. After all, until recently economic anthropology has tended to focus on small-scale societies where 'the gift', and not 'the commodity' predominated. Of course, small-scale settings are also important in the region, and in fact villages and Bedouin desert communities have been (with important exceptions) the dominant sites for ethnographic research and theorising in the region.

In both urban and rural settings in the Near East, the gift and non-monetary exchanges are crucial to the economy writ large. It is usually obvious that interest does not stand starkly revealed in ways assumed by economic theory and notions of *homo economicus*. Economic practices can aim as much at the accumulation of cultural capital as at the accumulation of economic value. Exchanges of gifts, in the broadest anthropological sense, are often crucial to social interaction. In other words, in the economies of the Near East, both the 'gift' and the 'commodity' are relevant and intertwined. These points should not be taken to indicate Near Eastern exceptionalism, however (see, for example, Carrier 1995). Rather, I am suggesting that taking on the theoretical challenges in the Near East can contribute to economic anthropology as a whole.

Conducting a serious economic anthropological study of the region demands broad knowledge, including fluency in relevant languages, especially Arabic. A rudimentary knowledge of Islamic law is important as well, since it remains a crucial source of economic regulation in the region, even in states defined as secular. Likewise, economic practices in some sectors of the

economy (like the small workshops that the World Bank has estimated make up 99 per cent of private sector units in Cairo; World Bank 1994: 3) are deeply intertwined with the sphere usually called 'popular religion'. The evil eye, for example, could be called an intangible factor of production in many craft workshops of Egypt and other countries of the former Ottoman Empire (Elyachar 2004). However, with important exceptions (for example, Gosh 1983; Starrett 1995), there is little ethnographic research that looks at this interface of religion and economy.

History and property in the Near East

There is a fair amount of research on property in the Near East, often from the point of view of legal anthropology. Property law in the region draws on many sources: Islamic, Ottoman, French and British. Historically, foreigners have been granted immense economic privileges in the region. This was true even before the formal occupation of many countries in the region. In 1740, long-standing arrangements between the Ottoman Porte and Western powers called the 'Capitulations' became more extensive and widespread. Under this regime, foreigners in Ottoman lands were exempted from most forms of local property law. Local non-Muslims, moreover, were often granted certificates of protection (*berats*), which accorded them most of the privileges of foreign nationals. The Ottoman Public Debt Administration, established in 1881, gave European holders of Ottoman bonds the right to revenue streams from key commodities in the region. Egypt had been forced to accept a similar scheme in 1876. Also in Egypt, 'mixed courts' arbitrated over all property disputes in which foreigners or holders of *berats* were involved, a regime that only ended together with the Capitulations in 1937. Given this history, property law has been an important terrain through which states in the region have attempted to consolidate their power, through nationalisations and appropriations most obviously. An economic anthropology of property in the Middle East, in other words, must deal with history, the state and the question of power.

Given the importance of law for the economic anthropology of property, it is perhaps not surprising that one of the few programmatic statements about property in the Near East comes from Laura Nader, a legal anthropologist who is not, however, an expert in the Near East. Nader's introduction to a 'pioneering attempt to understand something more about the relationship between property, law, and social structure in the Middle East' (Nader 1985: 1) also serves as a good introduction to anthropological thinking about property in general. Conventionally in anthropology, property is approached as an 'idiom of social relations'. Property disputes, in turn, can be most important as a mechanism through which social relationships are maintained or disrupted, and through which indigenous social structure is reproduced (1985: 3). Nader discusses the ways in which legal pluralism can inspire

'multiple strategies by individuals seeking wealth, power, and prestige, and planners attempt to solve social problems and generate social change through the law' (1985: 23). As it turns out, such an approach has been fruitful in studies of water and land in the Near East.

Ethnography of water and land

Landed property is of interest in anthropology of the Near East for many reasons. From an anthropological point of view, land is more than a key means of production. As what Weiner (1992) called an 'inalienable possession', land often mediates central aspects of culture and cosmology. Water is at least as important in the Near East since it is a resource in short supply. As water scarcity becomes a growing issue world wide, the long experience of the Near East with water scarcity and diverse forms of regulation takes on increasing relevance for a broader audience.

Landed property is a favourite subject of Islamic law. Water, on the other hand, has generally lain within the terrain of local practice and customary law (Hammoudi 1985: 27). Customary law in Morocco, Hammoudi has argued, is also a good example of the anthropological precept that property is about relationships, not about substance. We should not think, however, that 'customary law' is something pure and traditional. Rather, it was codified by colonial powers (a point also made in Moore 1986). Study of the use of water in Morocco and throughout the region is a window into how law, history, social order and cosmology are interlinked (Hammoudi 1980, 1985).

In pre-Saharan Morocco, the distribution and allocation of water reveal 'an attempt to control, through social relationships, what seems to be an uncontrollable substance – a certain quantity of water that cannot be known with exactitude' (Hammoudi 1985: 29). Rights in water could be property, but not water itself. Likewise, in Yemen, usufruct rights were attached to the land in a unit that could not be separated. Permanent transfer of water rights could occur only through the alienation of land (Mundy 1995: 66). Rights to irrigation time could also be transferred in the region. Rights in land, in turn, were conceived of in terms of inheritance rights. In many Near Eastern societies, in other words, water was traditionally an inalienable good as well. Over time, however, water has been turned into a commodity that can be measured, alienated, bought and sold.

Clearly, an adequate anthropological approach to property such as water rights demands attention to the different levels pointed to by Hammoudi. Water is intertwined with power and with the senses; it has a history of being inalienable but is becoming alienated from the land where it was found and the groups who live on that land by force, technological transformation and occupation. In her research in Oman, Limbert (2001) takes steps towards such an approach with her analysis of how the sensory experience of water

intersects with community and national memory in a time of great political transformation. Her article tracks in parallel fashion a political economy approach to development and water in Oman on the one hand, and on the other the lived experience of water by different generations and genders. Limbert emphasises the ways in which analysis of water in the Near East must stretch across the spheres of the personal, the economic and the political.

The most successful attempt so far to address the issues demanded of an economic anthropology of water, land and property in the Near East was produced not by an anthropologist but rather by a novelist, Abdelrahman Munif. Water, land and property could be called central characters in the novels of Munif, who was stripped of his Saudi citizenship for political reasons including the writing of these novels. Land, water, oil, and markets are at the centre of Munif's trilogy, *Cities of salt*, two volumes of which are translated into English (Munif 1989, 1991). His tale begins with the arrival of the first Americans to a community worried that their water will be stolen by these strangers with unfamiliar instruments, language, and ways. Munif tells the more or less historically accurate tale of how oil transformed this fictional Saudi Arabia from multiple points of view. All that economic anthropology should do is here in this novel: commodities and gifts, property and power, the state and multinational corporations, the cultural means through which economic transformation is processed and understood, are just some of the themes of this masterpiece (which reads better, of course, in the original Arabic, despite a sensitive translation).

Islam and law as rules and practice

Islam is a key source of law even in the secular post-colonial states of the region. Islamic law has traditionally been the purview of Orientalists and historians of the region, and there is still much work to be done by economic anthropologists. For example, with the exception of Messick's (1992) important work in Yemen, there is next to no research published in English on *waqf* property and how states incorporate or limit its bounds (as noted by Nader 1985: 21). Likewise, there is next to no research published on Islamic legal codes in the formal or practical absence of a central state (Ghani 1978). One scholar who has carried out important work on property, markets and Islamic law in Yemen, Martha Mundy, does not specifically interrogate the literature in economic anthropology, but her work stands as an exemplar of what can be done in this subfield-to-be (Mundy 1979, 1995).

Mundy's research combines fine ethnography with a broad-based theoretical grounding in anthropology and Islamic law, as well as an excellent command of Arabic. Her fieldwork was carried out in Yemen, one of the three most important fieldwork sites for research in this subfield (the others being Egypt and North Africa). Mundy shows how a conception of land rights in

Yemen in terms of inheritance, rather than via the market, 'encourages long-term strategies whereby managers of households anticipate and adapt relations within the household to assure succession to land' (Mundy 1995: 66). Analysis of conflicts over property gives a window into strategies and social practice over time. Here Mundy shows that the assumed opposition, among both Muslim writers and ethnographers of Arab societies, between Islamic law (where 'rules' prevail) and local custom (where 'practice' prevails) is misleading. She lays to rest the idea that determining land rights entails merely the application of written Islamic law. She draws on detailed ethnographic research on the one hand, and the French social theorist Pierre Bourdieu on the other, to make clear that 'the rules' can be quite different from practice when it comes to the transmission of property.

Islam does not provide 'the rules' regarding property. Rather, Islam is often a universe of discourse of agreement and disagreement for women in Yemen who are negotiating their claims to a share of family property. That does not mean, however, that Islamic law is always followed, even when it is invoked. Nor is it always in women's interest to pursue the enforcement of their individual rights in property shares inherited from their fathers under Islamic law. For example, women in the community Mundy studied tended not to enforce their inheritance rights. By ceding part of their land to their brothers in a free share-cropping agreement, women gained support and power within their marriage: for good relations with brothers were important to women as a bulwark in case of conflict with their husbands. Only later in life, when women had security in their marriage and sons to support them in old age, did women pursue their individual property rights (Mundy 1995: 173).

Furthermore, Mundy shows that documents do not accurately convey the exact way in which property is transmitted among family members (Mundy 1995: 174). For example, a woman who controls land inherited from her father might not have that property listed under her name in irrigation records. In a context where honour is violated by having a woman's personal name mentioned in the public sphere, accurate accounts of ownership or usufruct rights are not necessarily what is written on paper. Practice can offer a better view of property rights than records of the state, even though state records are often assumed to be objective. For example, a state-employed irrigation supervisor explained his conundrum to Mundy, regarding why the names on an official list of irrigation rights did not accurately reflect to whom those rights accrued. Stating the obvious, he said, 'Or should I put down a woman's name?'. Out of respect for the woman's honour and that of her family, he left her deceased father's name on the books recording irrigation rights to water, although he and all the members of the community knew that the rights accrued to the woman (1995: 172).

From the margins: segmentation and gender

A great deal of material relevant to economic anthropology is published in ethnographies which are, in the main, engaged with debates of other sub-disciplines. For example, the field of Near Eastern anthropology was long absorbed in debates about segmentation theory. One side of that debate saw the elaborate theories of segmentation reported by informants to be an 'ideology' around which material interests were organised. Kinship was the language through which tribes talked about, and organised, access to water and land.

For example, in his work on the Bedouin in Cyrenaica, E.L. Peters (1968) showed how apparently-rigid status segmentation among Bedouin between two groups, the *marabtin* ('the tied') and the *hurr* ('the free', 'the noble') is actually far more fluid than one would expect according to the rules or ideology of the Bedouin. Peters views the relationship between these two groups in terms of patron and client, which immediately puts the issue of resources, and thus the issues of economic anthropology, on the agenda. Apparently-rigid status structures can actually be a fluid way of organising patron–client relationships that mediate access to the key resources of land and water.

Another way that themes of economic anthropology creep in around the edges is in discussions of women and of politics in the Near East. For example, political scientist Diane Singerman (1995) published a widely read ethnography of poor women in Cairo that is also a critique of elite-centred political science approaches to Near Eastern studies. She draws on the example of informal economy to argue that poor people in Egypt achieve their objectives through the mobilisation of informal methods and networks. While Singerman's book uses the notion of informality to analyse politics, her chapter titled 'Informality: politics and economics in tandem' has more direct focus on the informal economy.

Development and local research institutions

Development is another topic that skirts the edges of an economic anthropology of the Near East. In Egypt in particular, anthropology of development is both scholarship and practice. Anthropology has a strong institutional presence at the American University in Cairo (AUC), through its Department of Sociology and Anthropology and its Social Research Centre. The Social Research Centre carries out interdisciplinary social science research that seeks to inform policy formation and implementation in the region as well as to contribute to knowledge. The American University in Cairo Press has published a series of monographs, collections, and the journal, *Cairo Papers in Social Science*, that are of direct concern to an economic anthropology of the Near East. The titles of many of these monographs point

to the Centre's and University's focus on rural sociology and development, as well as a strong interest in urban poverty and the informal economy.

Here, one should keep in mind the important place of AUC and the Centre in training students for work in development agencies in Egypt, which is the second largest recipient of development aid from the United States, and a major recipient of development funding from European Union countries and Arab countries as well. Similarly, AUC and the Centre are key locations for the production of knowledge for development initiatives. Throughout Egypt, a great deal of research is carried out with differing levels of professionalism within various kinds of non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Research and 'fieldwork' became an important part of NGO activities in the 1980s, something that was hailed by Appadurai (2000) as evidence of 'grassroots globalization' but which was viewed more critically by Elyachar (2002). With some exceptions, this body of work on development tends not to be engaged with theoretical debates within economic anthropology as a sub-discipline. Most of this work has as its audience area specialists and the development organisations that fund and support the informal economy.

Rural and urban studies: the peasant and the informal economy

Nicholas Hopkins has conducted research and edited collections that form a significant body of research on peasants and agrarian society in the Near East, in Egypt in particular (Hopkins 1987, 1992; Hopkins and Westergaard 1998). Another such important collection edited by a political scientist, Ray Bush (2002), examines land and farmers in the era of economic reform. Much important information about land, property and peasants was produced by the Land Centre for Human Rights in Cairo, an NGO that advocated the rights of the rural poor until it was shut down by the Mubarak regime in 2003, when a renewal of its licence as an NGO was refused (see Land Centre 2002).

If research on 'the peasant' is a key organising category for analysis of the countryside, then it is the concept of 'informal economy' that has been key for exploration of relevant urban issues in the Near East. The informal economy was a favourite field of development intervention for those interested in supporting 'empowerment' and 'women's initiatives' in the region in the 1980s and 1990s (Elyachar 2002). Knowledge about the informal economy, in turn, was often generated by anthropologists and other researchers working for or funded by large international organisations and development agencies (Elyachar 2003, 2004). Perhaps because of the strong link of this research to development agendas, and a tendency in anthropology to separate high theory from practical issues like development, this body of research is also largely isolated from debates in the sub-discipline. Theorising about the informal economy, interestingly enough, has been more important in the field of politics.

Towards an economic anthropology of the Near East?

Politics is also the institutional home for what is unquestionably the most important work in years dealing with economy in the Near East from an anthropological perspective. Timothy Mitchell's *Rule of experts* (2002) lays out important new questions that illustrate the importance of our subfield-to-be. While Mitchell is not a card-carrying anthropologist, he conducts fieldwork in Upper Egypt and brings an ethnographic sensibility to interrogate the constitution and reproduction of an entity called 'the economy' in Egypt. Mitchell draws on his ethnographic and historical research in Egypt to contribute to broader theoretical debates in anthropology, sociology and science studies. A key interlocutor of his text is Michel Callon (1998), whose work on economics and markets has been so important in economic sociology. This book will open up important new lines of research among anthropologists of the region.

At the same time, a forthcoming monograph about economy and markets in Egypt takes on theoretical issues that have been of concern in economic anthropology in recent years (Elyachar 2005).

Near Eastern Studies as a whole increasingly interrogates a broad range of theoretical debates and a new generation of students is being trained to take up some of the lines of research I have suggested here. Any number of economic issues in the region – such as globalisation, the occupation of Iraq to create a 'free market', efforts to privatise water led by the World Bank and to use it as a security weapon by Israel – nearly beg for such an anthropological approach. Given the growing importance in the region of such diverse forms of power as international organisations, NGOs and occupying powers as well as states, it seems a good time to pursue an approach to property as a bundle of powers rather than as a bundle of rights (as suggested in Verdery 1998). One indication of how this might be done in research on the region can be found in Elyachar (2003), where unravelling the story of a property dispute in a neighbourhood of Cairo entails a discussion of emergent forms of power in the region. All in all, there is much for us to do to create a sub-discipline that exists not only at the margins of other fields, but as an economic anthropology of the Middle East for itself, one engaged with crucial issues of our times, and engaged with the important questions of the discipline as well.

Note

1. But see, in Appadurai, Spooner (1986), which deals with 'oriental carpets' and the mention of Yemen in Cassanelli's (1986) chapter on Qat.

References

Abu-Lughod, L. 1989. Zones of theory in the anthropology of the Arab World. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 18: 267–306.

Appadurai, A. (ed.) 1986. *The social life of things: commodities in cultural perspective*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
Appadurai, A. 2000. Grassroots globalization and the research imagination. *Public Culture* 12: 1–19.
Asad, T. 1973. *Anthropology and the colonial encounter*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press.
Bourdieu, P. 1965. The sentiment of honour in Kabyle society. In *Honour and shame: the values of Mediterranean society* (ed.) J. Peristiany. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Bourdieu, P. 1977. *Outline of a theory of practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Bush, R. (ed.) 2002. *Counter-revolution in Egypt's countryside*. New York: Zed Books.
Callon, M. (ed.) 1998. Introduction: the embeddedness of economic markets in economics. In *The laws of the market*, M. Callon. Oxford: Blackwell.
Carrier, J.G. 1995. *Gifts and commodities: exchange and Western capitalism since 1700*. London: Routledge.
Cassanelli, L. 1986. Qat: changes in the production and consumption of a quasilegal commodity in northeast Africa. In *The social life of things: commodities in cultural perspective* (ed.) A. Appadurai. New York: Cambridge University Press.
Eickelman, D. 1983. Religion and trade in western Morocco. *Research in Economic Anthropology* 5: 335–48.
Eickelman, D. and J. Piscatori 1990. *Muslim travellers: pilgrimage, migration and the religious imagination*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Elyachar, J. 2002. Empowerment money: the World Bank, non-governmental organizations, and the value of culture in Egypt. *Public Culture* 14: 493–513.
Elyachar, J. 2003. Mappings of power: the state, NGOs, and international organizations in the informal economy of Cairo. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 45: 571–605.
Elyachar, J. 2005. *Markets of dispossession: empowering the poor in Cairo*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press (forthcoming).
Geertz, C. 1962. The rotating credit association: a 'middle rung' in development. *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 10: 240–63.
Geertz, C. 1963. *Peddlers and princes: social change and economic modernization in two Indonesian towns*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Geertz, C. 1968. *Islam observed: religious development in Morocco and Indonesia*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.
Ghani, A. 1978. Islam and state-building in a tribal society, Afghanistan: 1880–1901. *Modern Asian Studies* 12: 269–84.
Gilsenan, M. 1996. Lying, honor, and contradiction. In *Transaction and meaning: directions in the anthropology of exchange and symbolic behavior* (ed.) B. Kapferer. Philadelphia, Pa.: Institute for the Study of Human Issues.
Gosh, A. 1983. The relations of envy in an Egyptian village. *Ethnology* 22: 211–23.
Hammoudi, A. 1980. Segmentarity, social stratification, political power and sainthood: reflections on Gellner's theses. *Economic Sociology* 9: 279–303.
Hammoudi, A. 1985. A substance and relation: water rights and water distribution in the Dra Valley. In *Property, social structure and law in the modern Middle East* (ed.) A. Mayer. Albany: State University of New York Press.
Hann, C.M. (ed.) 1998. *Property relations: renewing the anthropological tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Hopkins, N. 1987. *Agrarian transformation in Egypt*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview.
Hopkins, N. (ed.) 1992. *Informal sector in Egypt*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press.
Hopkins, N. and K. Westergaard (eds) 1998. *Directions of change in rural Egypt*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press.
Humphrey, C. and S. Hugh-Jones (eds) 1992. *Barter, exchange and value: an anthropological approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Land Centre for Human Rights, Cairo 2002. Farmer struggles against Law 96 of 1992. In *Counter-revolution in Egypt's countryside* (ed.) R. Bush. New York: Zed Books.
Limbert, M. 2001. The senses of water in an Omani town. *Social Text* 19: 35–55.

Manger, L.O. (ed.) 1984. *Trade and traders in the Sudan*. Bergen: Department of Social Anthropology, University of Bergen.
Messick, B. 1992. *The calligraphic state: textual domination and history in a Muslim society*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Mitchell, T. 2002. *Rule of experts*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Moore, S.F. 1986. *Social facts and fabrications: 'customary' law on Kilimanjaro, 1880–1980*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Mundy, M. 1979. Women's inheritance of land in highland Yemen. *Arabian Studies* 5: 161–87.
Mundy, M. 1995. *Domestic government: kinship, community and polity in North Yemen*. London: I.B. Tauris.
Munif, A. 1989. *Cities of salt*. New York: Vintage Books.
Munif, A. 1991. *The trench*. New York: Random House.
Nader, L. 1985. Property as an idiom of social relationships. In *Property, social structure, and law in the modern Middle East* (ed.) A. Mayer. Albany: State University of New York Press.
Parry, J. and M. Bloch (eds) 1989. *Money and the morality of exchange*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Peters, E.L. 1968. The tied and the free: an account of patron–client relationships among the Bedouin of Cyrenaica. In *Contributions to Mediterranean sociology: Mediterranean rural communities and social change; acts of the Mediterranean Sociological Conference, Athens, July 1963* (ed.) J. Peristiany. The Hague: Mouton.
Singerman, D. 1995. *Avenues of participation: family, politics, and networks in urban quarters of Cairo*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Spooner, B. 1986. Weavers and dealers: the authenticity of an Oriental carpet. In *The social life of things: commodities in cultural perspective* (ed.) A. Appadurai. New York: Cambridge University Press.
Starrett, G. 1995. The political economy of religious commodities in Cairo. *American Anthropologist* 97: 51–68.
Tully, D. 1988. *Culture and context in Sudan: the process of market incorporation in Dar Masalit*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
Verdery, K. 1998. Property and power in Transylvania's decollectivization. In *Property relations: renewing the anthropological tradition* (ed.) C.M. Hann. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Weiner, A.B 1992. *Inalienable possessions: the paradox of keeping-while-giving*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
World Bank 1994. Private sector development in Egypt: the status and the challenges. Prepared for the conference, 'Private sector development in Egypt: investing in the future', Cairo, 9–10 October.

33 South Asia

John Harriss

I distinguish four themes in the economic anthropology of South Asia. The first concerns the '*jajmani* system', a phrase that refers to the ways that economic transactions may be embedded in the social relationships of caste in Indian villages. This is the classic theme in the economic anthropology of South Asia, and it leads logically into a second, the commercialisation and commoditisation of the rural economy. Third is a consideration of recent research on the environment and the management of natural resources. Finally, I consider the economic implications of caste and religion more generally, a theme with a considerable historical pedigree. This theme is linked with the increasing interest within economics in culture, and in the relationships between 'formal' and 'informal' institutions.

Rural economic transactions and the '*jajmani* system'

The 'substantivist' view of the economic anthropology of India was set out by Walter Neale, one of Karl Polanyi's (see Isaac chap. 1 supra) students. Neale aimed to show 'that the structure of the village economy … can be far better explained by the concepts of reciprocity and redistribution than they can by the more usual terms of economic theory' (Neale 1957: 222). Central to his analysis was the notion of the redistribution of the 'grain heap' after the harvest through the allocation of shares to different village servants and officials (for example, the blacksmith, carpenter, washerman and barber), who were themselves all connected through relationships of reciprocity within the caste system. The ruler too had a share, which came to be called 'land revenue' and which, Neale argued, 'is not a phenomenon of the market order and cannot be translated into market terms. To ask whether land-revenue was a rent or a tax was to misconstrue the economic organization of pre-British India' (1957: 234).

At around the time that Neale wrote, and for many years later, anthropologists observed these sorts of transactions; I saw the village temple priest, artisans, barbers and washermen receiving their shares on the threshing floors in south Indian villages in the 1970s (see Harriss 1982: 43ff.). By this time the idea of the '*jajmani* system' was widely referred to in the many ethnographies of village India (though this term seems to have been unknown to villagers themselves). This reflected the influence of a study of a north Indian village by W.H. Wiser, first published in 1936 (see Wiser 1969), which

referred to 'a system of redistribution in Indian villages whereby high caste landowning families called *jajmans* are provided services [including ritual ones] and products by lower castes [while] purely ritual services may be provided by Brahmin priests' (Kolenda 1967: 287). The idea of the *jajmani* system, symbolised in the grain heap, is one of a non-market economy regulated by customary rights and privileges and intrinsically bound up with caste relationships.

There was extensive debate about whether the system should be considered to be 'integrative' or 'exploitative' (discussed by Parry 1979: 74–83), in which the balance lay with integration, a position put by Louis Dumont (1970: 105), the outstanding modern theorist of caste: 'The needs of each are conceived to be different, depending on caste, on hierarchy, but this fact should not disguise the entire system's orientation towards the whole'. Epstein (1968), meanwhile, sought to show how *jajmani* relations provided some minimum guarantees of subsistence for artisans and labourers, in an argument that anticipated the later formulation by James Scott (1976) of the idea of 'the moral economy'.

More recently, Fuller (1992; and after him Mayer 1993) argued convincingly that, while there is no doubt that there are customary relationships in many Indian villages in which payments are made in kind, the whole idea of the *jajmani* system is a construction of the anthropological imagination and a misleading simplification.[1] Most important for the argument is the strong historical evidence showing that, as early as the thirteenth century, the 'king's share' was very often paid in cash and that the consequent demand for cash was one major factor integrating villages into a wider monetised economy. There is evidence, too, from pre-colonial India of the existence of private property rights and of a market in them. So, although there were (as there remain) redistributive systems in Indian villages, there were also private and exclusive rights which stood 'as the antithesis of [the idea of] complementary interdependence [emphasised by Dumont]' (Fuller 1992: 50). Fuller's work points to the significance of commercialisation and to the development of a market economy even at an early stage in Indian history, and these are also significant themes for the anthropology of contemporary India.

'Agrarian structure', commercialisation, class and caste

The village studies that were the stock in trade of South Asian anthropologists until the 1980s were generally preoccupied with aspects of caste and religion, heavily influenced by the structural-functionalism that underlay the idea of the *jajmani* system.[2] Beteille's village ethnography in the Thanjavur region of south India started to break this tradition with an investigation of the relationships of caste, class and power. It showed how these were once largely coincident, but have latterly become increasingly distinct (Beteille 1965; see

also Beteille 1974). His lead was followed in work on 'agrarian structure', the network of relationships among groups of people deriving their livings from the land, and on the impact upon it of the commercialisation and commoditisation that were taking place, especially following the 'green revolution' in the 1960s. This had significantly increased both farmers' needs for cash and the further commoditisation of agriculture.

Agrarian structures throughout the South Asian region are characterised by inequality and asymmetries of power. Although large landed estates are relatively unusual (except in parts of Pakistan) and the largest landowners in a village may own no more than twenty acres or so,[3] commonly a handful of village households own as much as half of the land, while half of the households own virtually nothing. Also, women's rights in land are severely constrained (Agarwal 1994, which is also a major source on gender relations in South Asia).

In Marxist terms (see Robotham chap. 3 supra), the peasantry is highly 'differentiated'. 'Rich peasants', the dominant landholders (certainly less than 10 per cent of the rural population), exercise power in land, labour, money and commodity markets, as well as in politics. Large numbers of 'poor peasants' and of landless, casual wage labourers are locked into personalised relationships of dependence in all these markets with rich peasants, moneylenders or traders (roles sometimes combined in the same person). Because of the extent of such personalised relationships, the markets themselves are imperfect ('fragmented'): there are significant price differences that cannot be explained by the calculus of supply and demand. Such personalised relations constrain rural productivity because the returns on moneylending and trading are likely to be greater than on agricultural production, so that there is little incentive for productive investment. These relations can also hinder collective action and hence adversely affect the development of irrigation (see Thorner 1956 for a classic statement on such agrarian relations; Boyce 1987 on problems of collective action in irrigation; Bharadwaj 1985).

These agrarian production relations do not coincide perfectly with caste differences (or their local equivalents in Bangladesh and Pakistan) but there is a good deal of overlap. Rich peasants mostly come from dominant castes, labourers come from low-caste groups, and the relationships between them may well have a religious significance given that, because of their caste positions, some of the labourers are responsible for performing ritual services. Thus, class relationships may actually be perceived by those concerned in them in terms of caste (Harriss 1982, 1994), and the by now highly commercialised rural economy remains, in significant ways, embedded in caste relations. Rural labour markets, for example, remain fragmented spatially between villages, depending upon differences of caste structure and upon whether rich peasants are concerned to maintain their social and ritual as

well as economic dominance (for example, Bardhan and Rudra 1986; Harriss 1991b). Labour markets are also fragmented by caste, as Breman (1985) has shown in south Gujarat, where local lower-caste people remained unemployed even while the dynamic regional economy drew in labour from outside. Generally, caste influences the ways in which people get jobs, and members of scheduled castes are usually excluded from some occupations.[4]

One particular aspect of production relations in the context of the more intensively commercialised rural economy is that of the persistence or not of patronage in the relations of cultivators and labourers. There is evidence, like that of Epstein (referred to above), that patron–client relationships were widespread and acquired legitimacy because they offered some minimum guarantees of subsistence, exactly as Scott's argument about 'the moral economy of the peasantry' suggests. As the rural economy has become more commoditised it seems that there are possibly different trajectories of change.[5] In some cases the dominant caste cultivators have clearly aimed to rid themselves of their historical moral and material commitments to lower-caste labourers (see Breman[6] (1974) 1989, in Alavi and Harriss 1989: 153). In yet other cases, however, it appears that dependence, perhaps with elements of patronage involved, is re-established where it is in the interests of landholders to attach dependent labourers to themselves through long-term debt, in order to reduce their labour costs (see Ortiz chap. 4 supra). Whether this kind of attachment, and the 'unfreedom' of labour which it implies, can be described in terms of 'patronage' is a matter of considerable debate.[7]

The management of the commons

A relatively new theme in the economic anthropology of rural South Asia concerns the environment and people's perceptions of and ways of using natural resources. An early but still important study is Guha's (1989) on conflicts over forest management between forest dwellers and the state in the hills of Uttar Pradesh, while more recently Sivaramakrishnan (1999) has contributed research on state formation, forest management and environmental change in southwest Bengal. His work has moved Indian environmental history beyond the romantic simplifications of the nationalist environmentalism exemplified by Guha (and by Gadgil and Guha 1992, 1995).

The increasing interest among scholars in the possibilities for local, community management of natural resources, which are either 'open access' or 'common pool' resources, has followed from concern about resource degradation. Stimulated by Hardin's (1968) paper 'The tragedy of the commons', a number of scholars came up with empirical cases of successful local management, and Elinor Ostrom (1990) developed a general theory, within a rational-choice framework, to explain the conditions for such success.

More recently it has come to be widely accepted that the involvement of users in the management of resources is probably generally desirable in the interests of efficiency and sustainability, as in the Indian Joint Forest Management schemes (see Poffenberger and McGean 1996).

A significant contribution to this literature from South Asia was Robert Wade's (1988) study of the development of local institutions for the management of irrigation water in parts of Andhra Pradesh. His explanation for the existence of these institutions is couched within a rational-choice framework, and he may underrate the significance of Reddy dominance in villages where water management institutions exist. More generally, it has been argued that the approach reflected in Wade's research can be enriched by 'the analysis of power [as his might have been had he taken greater account of Reddy dominance] and … the study of how political asymmetries across social groups affect their interactions and resource management related outcomes' (Agrawal 2001: 186; work of this kind includes Agrawal 1999; Agrawal and Sivaramakrishnan 2001; Mosse 2003).

Caste, religion and economic activity

Many observers of South Asia in the twentieth century argued that caste and the religious ideas associated with it, notably the doctrines of *karma* (commonly translated as 'fate') and of *samsara* (the idea of the cycle of rebirth), powerfully constrain economic development. A recent statement of these ideas is by the Nepali anthropologist Dor Bahadur Bista (1991), but the *locus classicus* for the idea that caste and religious values hamper development is Max Weber's *The religion of India*. Weber argued that Hinduism and Buddhism have no equivalent of 'the Protestant ethic' that he had seen as being intrinsically bound up with the development of capitalism in the West, and also that the caste system prevented the emergence of a capitalist free market. The ethics of 'this-worldly asceticism' that Weber observed among Calvinists in particular and which appeared to be so important for their 'rationalisation' of their conduct – and thus for the development of capitalism – had no equivalent in India, he thought: 'The conception that through simple behaviour addressed to the "demands of the day", one may achieve salvation … is alien to Asia. This is as excluded from Asiatic thought as the pure factual rationalism of the West, which practically tries to discover the impersonal laws of the world' (Weber 1967 [1916–17]: 342). In one way or another, his conclusion that cultural conditions have constrained the development of capitalism in South Asia has been reiterated by more recent scholars (for example, Myrdal 1968).

Weber's arguments were first subjected to ethnographic scrutiny by Milton Singer, who studied 'the industrial leaders' of Madras in the early 1960s, 'the most relevant group for a test of Weber's thesis' (1972: 284). Generally,

Singer says, these businessmen stressed the philosophical foundations of Hinduism and the idea of Hinduism as a 'way of life' and a code of ethical conduct, rather than ritual observance.[8] He felt that they could generally be described as 'this-worldly ascetics', just like Weber's Protestant capitalists, and he concluded that, far from acting as fetters on development, Hinduism can be seen as having very positive effects for entrepreneurship. This was part of his wider argument that 'the cultural ideology of "traditionalism" [may be] one of the major instruments of modernisation' (1972: 384). He also pointed out that there is a structural parallelism between the Hindu joint family and the modern corporation, and that it could provide a strong basis for the development of large industrial organisations.

Singer also noted, however, that caste was significantly reflected in employment patterns and labour markets, with the caste hierarchy being reproduced, albeit imperfectly, in the different categories of jobs in modern companies. These patterns, which persist, show the long-standing connections between caste background and educational opportunity rather than caste prejudice *per se* (on caste and labour market structure, see Breman 1996; Harriss 1986; Holmstrom 1984; Parry, Breman and Kapadia 1999). Caste differences also continue to influence industrial relations, as when personnel managers try to avoid having substantial blocs of employees from particular castes or communities. Writing of the extensive informal economy of India rather than of the corporate sector, Harriss-White (2003: chap. 7) has shown the continuing economic significance of caste in her studies of the economy of a small market town in northern Tamil Nadu. She shows that economic liberalisation and modernisation have not dissolved economic relations based on caste, but have reinforced them, in what she calls 'caste corporatism'.

The role of caste in the economy is also the subject of several studies of particular business caste communities, of which David Rudner's, on the Nattukottai Chettiars of South India, is outstanding (other important works include Laidlaw 1995; Mines 1972, 1984; Timberg 1977). Rudner (1994: 134) takes issue with Singer's presumption that business leaders needed to establish the kind of 'dichotomy between secular and transcendental realms [that] was the stimulus to Protestant ascetic individualism'. He shows that members of the Chettiar elite 'made rational use of economically "irrational" ritual' (1994: 135), and that the caste and religious institutions of the Chettiars created the basis for a powerful banking organisation.

Rudner's study shows how strong trust, which facilitates economic transactions, may be built up within business caste communities such as the Chettiars. A critical question, then, is that of whether such *specific* or *personalised* trust, developed within a particular group of people, provides the basis for *generalised* trust that runs through society as a whole. The economist J.-P. Platteau has argued that such generalised trust is necessary for an

effectively functioning market economy, in which, the argument runs, it must be possible to trust strangers. Platteau is pessimistic with regard to South Asia, arguing that

> these societies remain under the strong influence of traditional patterns of social relations, in particular the primacy of family and caste relations. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that rights and obligations associated with these patterns still tend to predominate over the rules and norms rooted in the *abstract individual* (as opposed to the *concrete person*) which are the typical products of western history. (Platteau 1994: 797; original emphasis)

This neo-Weberian argument resonates with the work of the Indian anthropologist Satish Saberwal, who argues that because of the 'traditional autonomy of segmental codes [for conduct, related to differences between caste groups] the idea of extensively binding normative orders [across society as a whole, and] effective down to particular persons has been relatively alien to India's historical experience' (Saberwal 1996: 65; this argument assumes that what is ascribed to the West by Weber or, more recently by Platteau, really does exist, rather than representing an ideal).

It is important that Saberwal says 'relatively alien', because there are 'binding normative orders' within the Hindu tradition and because, as Mines argues with reference to business people in Chennai, change is taking place: 'To a considerable extent the need to establish trust through enduring personal ties [often within caste communities] has been replaced by impersonal contractual relationships, law and governmental bureaucracy' (Mines 1994: 79). Yet change may not be quite so straightforward as Mines implies. Garrett Menning (1997: 63) argues on the basis of research in Surat (Gujarat) that 'In some respects it appears that the very strength of personalised trust … may have actually inhibited the development of other types'. The kind of trust that is strong is among groups of people within specific social networks, and this has allowed the development of great business enterprises. This selective trust has to be relied upon when institutionalised sanctions and incentives are weak, as they are in India. But the weakness of institutionalised sanctions also has to do with the strength of selective trust, reflected in the problems of corporate governance. At the centre of these is 'the culture of compliance', a boardroom culture shaped by traditions of deference, and of promoter control of boards within the great family businesses, a culture resistant to external scrutiny. Business families have always sought to retain control within a tight circle of kin and resisted the claims of what one of them[9] refers to as 'explicitly stated principles and ethical norms'. But then, the lack of consistently applied principles in the external environment justifies or leads to reliance on selective trust in a kind of a vicious circle. The problem of business management in India in the context of economic globalisation is that of bringing about a

change in the institutional framework and in business behaviour, but in a context in which these changes confront the culture of 'selective trust'. Change is taking place, but only against the resistance that derives from the strength of selective trust.[10] Harriss-White (2003: 197) makes the same point with regard to the vast informal economy: 'Market exchange does not always lead to "contracts" replacing "custom" [while] contracts prove compatible with [and may need to be underlain by] a certain amount of custom'.

A note by way of conclusion

While the development of the economic anthropology of South Asia since Neale's Polanyian essay of 1957 has shown the severe limitations of his substantivist perspective, it has retained the central idea of the embedding of economic activity in social, political and cultural structures. Putting it a little more precisely, economic anthropology studies the inter-relations of formal institutions with the informal social order in which they are embedded, and hence it shows the importance for the economy of shared patterns of thought and behaviour, or culture. At present in South Asia these commonly have to do with caste and religion; they are not satisfactorily explained by mainstream economics and they remain exogenous in the currently fashionable new institutional economics.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank David Rudner and, as so often, my colleague Chris Fuller for valuable comments on a first draft of this chapter.

Notes

1. Commander, in an historical study in North India, also concludes that 'jajmani bore, for the most part, a very dim resemblance to the pure model' (1983: 310).
2. Classics include Marriott (1955), Mayer (1960) and Parry (1979).
3. It must be noted that there is a huge difference over most of South Asia, in terms of value and productivity, between irrigated ('wet') and non-irrigated ('dry') lands. Twenty acres of well-irrigated land is a really substantial holding; twenty acres of dryland may have little value.
4. Harriss-White (2003: 176) comments that 'Caste still screens access to employment in the agrarian no-farm economy', and refers to Jeffery (2001) for Uttar Pradesh and to Jayaraj (2003) for Tamil Nadu.
5. See the comparative work of Jens Lerche on labour relations in different regions of Uttar Pradesh (Lerche 1995, 1999); and for contrasting accounts from different parts of Tamil Nadu the work of Gough (1989) and Harriss (1982, 1991a).
6. Breman's is the classic study of patronage and agrarian production relations in India (1974; with a second revised and updated edition, 1993).
7. There is debate about whether this kind of attachment, and the 'unfreedom' of labour which it implies, can be described in terms of 'patronage', see Breman ([1974] 1989, in Alavi and Harriss 1989). A major study of the 'freedom' or 'unfreedom' of agricultural labour in India is Ramachandran (1990).
8. My studies of 'industrial leaders' in the same city in 2000, and of Singer's field notes, showed that he did not sufficiently recognise the importance of ritual and ecstatic religion for the businessmen (Harriss 2003).

9. M.V. Subbiah of the Muragappa Group, at the Confederation of Indian Industry's 'Family Business Conclave', Bangalore, 2000.
10. My points about boardroom culture are supported in Banaji (2001). My argument may seem to support Platteau (1994), but I think his approach misses the inter-relationships of institutions and societal systems of values that I have described here.

References

Agrawal, A. 1994. *A field of one's own: gender and land rights in South Asia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Agrawal, A. 1999. *Greener pastures: politics, markets and community among a migrant pastoral people*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Agrawal, A. 2001. Common property, forest management and the Indian Himalaya. *Contributions to Indian Sociology* (n.s.) 35: 181–212.

Agrawal, A. and K. Sivaramakrishnan (eds) 2001. *Social nature: resources, representations and rule in India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Alavi, H. and J. Harriss (eds) 1989. *The sociology of 'developing societies': South Asia*. London: Macmillan.

Banaji, J. 2001. *Corporate governance and the Indian private sector: a report*. Oxford: Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford.

Bardhan, P. and A. Rudra 1986. Labour mobility and the boundary of the village moral economy. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 13: 90–115.

Beteille, A. 1965. *Caste, class and power: changing patterns of stratification in a Tanjore village*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Beteille, A. 1974. *Studies in agrarian social structure*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Bharadwaj, K. 1985. A view on commercialisation in Indian agriculture and the development of capitalism. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 12: 7–25.

Bista, D.B. 1991. *Fatalism and development: Nepal's struggle for modernization*. Calcutta: Orient Longman.

Boyce, J. 1987. *Agrarian impasse in Bengal: institutional constraints to technological change*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Breman, J. 1974. *Patronage and exploitation: changing agrarian relations in south Gujarat, India*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Breman, J. 1985. *Of peasants, migrants and paupers: rural labour circulation and capitalist production in west India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Breman, J. 1993. *Patronage and exploitation*. (2nd, revised and expanded ed.) Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Breman, J. 1996. *Footloose labour: working in India's informal economy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Commander, S. 1983. The *jajmani* system in North India: an examination of its logic and status across two centuries. *Modern Asian Studies* 17: 283–311.

Dumont, L. 1970. *Homo hierarchicus: the caste system and its implications*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson.

Epstein, T.S. 1968. Productive efficiency and customary systems of rewards in South India. In *Themes in economic anthropology* (ed.) R. Firth. London: Tavistock.

Fuller, C.J. 1992. Misconceiving the grain heap: a critique of the concept of the Indian jajmani system. In *Money and the morality of exchange* (eds) J. Parry and M. Bloch. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gadgil, M. and R. Guha 1992. *This fissured land: an ecological history of India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Gadgil, M. and R. Guha 1995. *Ecology and equity: the use and abuse of nature in contemporary India*. London: Routledge.

Gough, K. 1989. *Rural change in south east India: 1950s to 1980s*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Guha, R. 1989. *The unquiet woods: ecological change and peasant resistance in the Indian Himalaya*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Hardin, G. 1968. The tragedy of the commons. *Science* 162: 1243–8.
Harriss, J. 1982. *Capitalism and peasant farming: agrarian structure and ideology in northern Tamil Nadu*. Bombay: Oxford University Press.
Harriss, J. 1986. The working poor and the labour aristocracy in a South Indian city: a descriptive and analytical account. *Modern Asian Studies* 20: 231–83.
Harriss, J. 1991a. The Green Revolution in North Arcot: economic trends, household mobility and the politics of an 'awkward class'. In *The Green Revolution reconsidered* (eds) P. Hazell and C. Ramasamy. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press.
Harriss, J. 1991b. Population, employment and wages: a comparative study of North Arcot villages 1973–1983. In *The Green Revolution reconsidered* (eds) P. Hazell and C. Ramasamy. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press.
Harriss, J. 1994. Between economism and post-modernism: reflections on research on 'agrarian change' in India. In *Rethinking social development: theory, research and practice* (ed.) D. Booth. London: Longman.
Harriss, J. 2003. The Great Tradition globalises: reflections on two studies of the 'industrial leaders' of Madras. *Modern Asian Studies* 37: 327–62.
Harriss-White, B. 2003. *India working: essays on society and economy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Holmstrom, M. 1984. *Industry and inequality: the social anthropology of Indian labour*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Jayaraj, D. 2003. Social institutions and the structural transformation of the non-farm economy. In *Reforms and rural development* (eds) B. Harriss-White and S. Janakarajan. London: Anthem.
Jeffery, C. 2001. 'A fist is stronger than five fingers': caste and dominance in rural North India. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* (n.s.) 26: 217–36.
Kolenda, P.M. 1967. Towards a model of the Hindu *jajmani* system. In *Tribal and peasant economies* (ed.) G. Dalton. Garden City, NY: American Museum of Natural History.
Laidlaw, J. 1995. *Riches and renunciation: religion, economy and society among the Jains*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Lerche, J. 1995. Is bonded labour a bound category? Reconceptualising agrarian conflict in India. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 22: 484–515.
Lerche, J. 1999. Politics of the poor: agricultural labourers and political transformations in Uttar Pradesh. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 26: 182–241.
Marriott, M. 1955. *Village India: studies in the great and little traditions*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
Mayer, A. 1960. *Caste and kinship in Central India*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
Mayer, P. 1993. Inventing village tradition: the late nineteenth century origins of the North Indian 'jajmani system'. *Modern Asian Studies* 27: 357–95.
Menning, G. 1997. Trust, entrepreneurship and development in Surat city, India. *Ethnos* 61: 59–90.
Mines, M. 1972. *Muslim merchants: the economic behaviour of an Indian Muslim community*. New Delhi: Sri Ram Centre for Industrial Relations and Human Resources.
Mines, M. 1984. *The warrior merchants: textiles, trade and territory in South India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Mines, M. 1994. *Public faces, private voices: community and individuality in South India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Mosse, D. 2003. *The rule of water: statecraft, ecology and collective action in South India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
Myrdal, G. 1968. *Asian drama: an inquiry into the poverty of nations*. New York: Twentieth Century Fund.
Neale, W. 1957. Reciprocity and redistribution in the Indian village: sequel to some notable discussions. In *Trade and markets in the early empires* (eds) K. Polanyi, C. Arensberg and H.W. Pearson. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press.
Ostrom, E. 1990. *The governance of the commons*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
Parry, J. 1979. *Caste and kinship in Kangra*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
Parry, J., J. Breman and K. Kapadia 1999. *The worlds of Indian industrial labour*. New Delhi: Sage.

Platteau, J.-P. 1994. Behind the market stage where real societies exist. *Journal of Development Studies* 30: 533–77, 753–817.
Poffenberger, M. and M. McGean (eds) 1996. *Village voices, forest choices: joint forest management in India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
Ramachandran, V.K. 1990. *Wage labour and unfreedom in agriculture: an Indian case study*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Rudner, D. 1994. *Caste and capitalism in colonial India: the Nattukottai Chettiars*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Saberwal, S. 1996. *The roots of crisis: interpreting contemporary Indian society*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
Scott, J. 1976. *The moral economy of the peasant: rebellion and subsistence in Southeast Asia*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.
Singer, M. 1972. *When the Great Tradition modernizes*. New York: Praeger.
Sivaramakrishnan, K. 1999. *Modern forests: statemaking and environmental change in colonial eastern India*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Thorner, D. 1956. *The agrarian prospect in India*. Delhi: Delhi University Press.
Timberg, T. 1977. *The Marwaris: from traders to industrialists*. Delhi: Vikas.
Wade, R. 1988. *Village republics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Weber, M. 1967 (1916–17). *The religion of India*. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press.
Wiser, W.H. 1969 (1936). *The Hindu jajmani system*. Lucknow: Lucknow Publishing House.

34 East Asia

J.S. Eades

East Asia (including both Northeast and Southeast Asia) presents a particularly complex arena for the investigation of economic phenomena by anthropologists for a number of reasons. First, many countries in the region have experienced their own versions of the 'economic miracle', with double-digit economic growth rates propelling some of them from the ranks of Third- to First-World countries. Second, this process has resulted in considerable economic diversity, both in production, exchange and consumption practices, and in levels of income. Economic growth has not produced uniform prosperity across the region, and even in Tokyo, the richest city in Japan, unemployed and homeless casual workers live rough in the major railway stations, underpasses and parks. Third, the region has also seen the impact of political ideologies, Stalinist, Maoist and capitalist, which have helped complicate the picture. Fourth, the literatures on countries like China and Japan are now vast and the boundaries between disciplines have become increasingly fuzzy, as anthropology itself has become more interdisciplinary. Finally, Western anthropologists are finding that they are not alone: they are increasingly having to take account of the vast mass of research being carried out by local scholars and published in Asian languages.

This complexity raises the question of how to cover the main themes and issues in the current literature in a chapter of this length. One possibility would be to divide the field in terms of the various theoretical schools within economic anthropology, such as rational actor, political economy, substantivist and cultural approaches, but the complexity of the subject matter means that the studies themselves are increasingly hard to classify in this way. It seems more sensible to concentrate on the main substantive issues that have been the focus of research in the last two decades, a period which has seen the rise and fall of the Japanese bubble economy, the emergence of China as a potential economic superpower and the economic crisis of 1997–98. I begin, therefore, by looking briefly at the role of the state in these upheavals, followed by discussion of the environment, agriculture, migration, urbanisation, industrialisation, consumption and globalisation. I focus mainly on the literature on Japan and China, which have been the subjects of the greatest volume of research, touching on Korea, Taiwan and Southeast Asia as appropriate.

The state

From a global perspective, the most important feature of East Asia since the Second World War has been the spectacular growth of many of its economies, and there has been considerable debate as to the reasons for this. The seminal work was Chalmers Johnson's (1982) study of the Japanese bureaucracy, which eventually gave rise to a comparative literature and the concept of the 'developmental state' (Woo-Cumings 1999). In Johnson's account, a talented group of bureaucrats steered the Japanese economy by controlling and channelling key resources, by providing informal guidance to companies through their personal networks and by maintaining a favourable exchange rate. This model has been applied to other countries of the region, with varied success: it is generally agreed it fits Japan and Korea best, and that some elements of it can be applied to Taiwan, Korea, Hong Kong and Singapore, although patterns of investment and administrative practices differ from country to country (Chiu and Liu 1998).

The underlying conclusion is that focused investment, a disciplined and highly trained labour force, and a stable political and economic climate are all necessary for this kind of high-speed growth to take place. Conversely, poor governance is a major cause of stagnation in some of the poorer countries, such as the Philippines and Indonesia, with their 'bossism', 'crony capitalism' and 'Mafioso states' (for example, Leith 2003; Oh 1999; Sidel 1999). Needless to say, corruption and gangsterism are also rife in Japan (Herbert 2000), but they have a less serious impact due to the underlying strength of the economy, and generally they have not resulted in the leaking of capital abroad.

The environment

Rapid economic growth has not been without its environmental costs. In addition to worries about soil degradation, air pollution, water pollution and the loss of biodiversity, there is now concern about the long-term effects of global warming and air pollution. Japan was the first country to experience major environmental problems due to high-speed growth, and by the 1970s the impact was severe. Eventually, industrial pollution resulted in localised outbreaks of serious illness, such as Minamata disease, *itai-itai* disease and Yokaichi asthma (McKean 1981), and subsequent changes of policy. Japan has managed to mitigate some of these problems, partly by exporting some of the more polluting activities to other parts of the region, but citizen protest over environmental issues has continued, particularly in relation to garbage disposal and landfill sites (Broadbent 1998).

This raises the issue of the link between environmental problems, politics and the nature of the state (Eades 1999). Given that the environmental records of authoritarian states such as the former Soviet Union and now China (Edmonds 1998; Smil 1993) are generally rather dismal, some predict that

the emergence of a middle class will eventually lead to democratisation, environmental movements and policy change. However, as the example of Japan shows, large corporations are also big players in democratic systems, and their environmental agendas may not be particularly benign either. As the Japanese cleaned up the grosser examples of industrial pollution, the number of golf courses, dams and resorts continued to increase (compare McCormack 1996: 78–112), bringing other environmental problems in their wake. Other countries in the region are starting to experience similar problems (Hirsch and Warren 1998).

Agriculture

Since the end of the Second World War, the traditional rice economies of the region (Bray 1986) have been radically transformed, most notably in Japan (Mulgan 1999). Land reform, the rationalisation of holdings, better infrastructure and new technologies resulted in a huge increase in productivity, while the revival of industry led to a mass exodus to the cities. Villages in many areas are seriously depopulated or, in extreme cases, abandoned (Knight 2003). Now farming in Japan is generally an occupation for the elderly, and much of the production is specialised and highly subsidised by the state.

China experienced its own post-war land reform under the communist regime, but here process was much more violent than in Japan. Generally, the cancellation of debt and early forms of collectivisation brought about a dramatic improvement in living standards for many peasants, but also prepared the way for the ill-fated Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution which followed. After the death of Chairman Mao Zedong in 1976, lessons from some of the more successful experiments from the period of turmoil were applied throughout the country during the Deng Xiaoping period. The result was the 'responsibility system', which devolved much of the decision making and control of the resulting income to individual households, leading to the gradual return of family farming (Kelliher 1992: 60–69). In one sense, this was a return to the petty capitalist forms of organisation which Gates (1996) argues has been the engine of the Chinese economy throughout history. The long-term effects of these changes are now well-documented for various parts of the country including Guangdong (Guldin 2001; Potter and Potter 1990; Siu 1989), Fujian (Guldin 2001; S. Huang 1989), Yunan and Hunan (Guldin 2001), Sichuan (Endicott 1988), Jianxi (Gao 1999), Shaanxi (Liu 2000), Shandong (Judd 1994), Heilongjiang (Yan 1996), Anhui (Han 2001) and the Yangzi Delta (P. Huang 1989).

Migration and urbanisation

One of the results of the increase in productivity in agriculture, combined with the increasing concentration of capital in the hands of the state, has been the

increase in migration throughout the region. In Japan, the process of urbanisation was both rapid and complete. In China, on the other hand, rural–urban migration was long discouraged and controlled by the internal passport system, and it was only after the full effect of the Deng reforms were felt that this situation changed.

In addition to rural–urban migration, there has also been considerable international migration affecting the region. Some of these flows are now historically well-documented, such as the Koreans in Japan (Fukuoka 2000; Ryang 1997; Weiner 1994) and various groups of Asian migrants in the United States (the papers in Zhou and Gatewood 2000). Labour migration to Japan has become a major policy issue with the declining birth-rate coupled with a ban on the import of unskilled labour (Komai 1995). The result has been illegal immigration (Loiskandl 1995), a casual labour force largely organised by the *yakuza* (the Japanese mobsters) and official tolerance alternating with occasional moral panics and crackdowns (Herbert 1996). The migrants present serious competition to Japan's own casual workforce, reflected in the problem of homelessness and street people in the larger cities (Gill 2001; Stevens 1997). One group of migrants who have been accepted legally are Latin Americans claiming Japanese descent (Tsuda 2003).

In East Asia as a whole, perhaps the most ubiquitous and visible group of migrants are those from the Philippines (Parrenas 2001). An unusual feature of this migration is the number of women working abroad as domestic servants, nursemaids or even brides in some rural areas in Japan. At the margins, these roles shade off into those of entertainer and hostess, and women migrants, particularly from the Philippines and Thailand, are also to be found in Japan's night-life and sex industries. As Louise Brown (2000) has documented, many of the women in Asia's sex industry come from the poorer regions of South and Southeast Asia, and they are passed from country to country by specialised recruiters and traffickers. Thailand provides a major hub for the trade (see Bishop and Robinson 1998), and some of the women end up working there while others move on to the wealthier countries to the north. The ultimate force driving this trade is the gross regional inequalities of incomes: not everyone has cashed in on the Asian economic miracle.

Massive flows of migrants have also led to the growth of massive urban agglomerations of five million people or more, the so-called 'megacities'. In East Asia these include the Tokyo and Osaka regions in Japan, and the Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai and Hong Kong–Guangzhou regions in China, together with Seoul, Taipei, Jakarta, Manila and Bangkok. In the megacities of developing countries, the main issues facing the residents are housing and jobs, and many find a solution in squatter settlements and the informal economy. Small-scale traders provide a flexible and low-cost distribution system for the larger companies, tricycle drivers provide a low-cost urban transportation network,

and squatters provide themselves with housing at a much lower cost than is possible for the state. With rapid economic growth and increasing state control however, the urban landscape may quickly change, as squatters are replaced by state housing and workers increasingly move into wage labour or salaried jobs (Eades 2002). The cities of Japan, Korea and Taiwan, along with Singapore and Hong Kong, have already largely made this transition, while others in China are well on the way.

Industrialisation

In the post-war period, anthropologists in many parts of the world moved into the workplace, and East Asia is no exception, a majority of the best studies coming from Japan. The occupational structure of Japan can be broadly divided into the large flagship multinational companies on the one hand, and on the other the smaller firms, often based on family labour. Studies have included banks (Rohlen 1974), manufacturing (Turner 1995), transport (Noguchi 1990), department stores (MacPherson 1998) and advertising companies (Moeran 1996). A major theme in the Japanese literature has been the intersection of gender and work, whether in factories (Roberts 1994), offices (Ogasawara 1998) or more generally (for example, Brinton 1993; Hunter 1993). There have also been various studies of smaller production sites, ranging from traditional pottery (Moeran 1997) and Buddhist altar production (Eades et al. 2000) to light engineering (Roberson 1998; Whittaker 1997) and confectionery (Kondo 1990). There have been similar studies of the urban economy from Hong Kong (for example, Salaff 1995) and China (Ikels 1996), where an important theme is the formal and informal regulation of private enterprises by the party and the state (for example, Bruun 1993).

Consumption

The study of consumption has been one of the largest growth industries in the economic anthropology of East Asia during the last twenty years. As basic needs have been increasingly satisfied for the urban populations, disposable incomes have risen fast and these have been spent on a variety of leisure activities, including sports, visits to theme parks, food and drink, including clubs and restaurants, fashion, make-up and sex. Clammer (1997) argues that consumption provides today's city dwellers with new forms of solidarity, as they are brought together by their consumption practices rather than anything else that they have in common. Some of the advertising companies have carried out extensive research of their own on these trends (McCreery 2000).

The importance of consumption is due to a number of factors. First, incomes have risen sharply, resulting in the formation of a new middle class (Chua 2000). Second, these forms of consumption are big business, and are integrated, packaged and marketed with considerable skill. Good examples are

the Japanese conglomerates that make use of the synergy gained from their interests in real estate, transport and leisure to advance their position in all three, the most famous example being that of the Seibu companies (Havens 1994).

Third, consumption is the site of many of the most interesting processes of cultural production taking place in East Asia, relating to the media, tourism, entertainment, life-cycle rituals and even food. There are a growing number of case studies of Asian media (see Moeran 2001), but two of the fullest to date are Moeran's (1996) study of Japanese advertising campaigns, and Kinsella's (2000) study of *manga* (comic book) production, both of which show well the relationships among artists, media companies and consumers.

As the world's largest industry, tourism is also an important site of cultural production (Yamashita 2003), which, in its heritage and cultural forms, involves a large measure of reinvention of tradition. Communities and governments in the region have seized upon these both as symbols of national and regional identity and as the basis of new tourist industries (Picard and Wood 1997; Yamashita, Din and Eades 1997). Meanwhile, theme parks have not only become huge businesses, but also cultural forms in their own right (Hendry 2000; Raz 1999). There is now an extensive literature on Japanese leisure (for general surveys, see Hendry and Raveri 2002; Linhart and Früstück 1998). Activities include sports, especially baseball and football, the various night-life industries, ranging from karaoke and night-clubs (Allison 1994) to commodified sex (Bornoff 1991; Constantine 1993), which is linked to the traffic in women, as noted above.

Life-cycle rituals are also big business among Asian consumers, and the commodification has probably gone furthest in the case of weddings and funerals in Japan (Edwards 1989; Goldstein-Gidoni 1997; Suzuki 2000). Specialist companies offering a total package either to the newlyweds or to the bereaved have arisen, and similar developments are now being documented for the other countries of the region with large, wealthy urban populations.

One of the most recent focuses of consumption research is food, with the volume edited by Cwiertka with Walraven (2001), Watson's (1997) survey of McDonald's in Asia and Jing (2000) on changing eating habits of Chinese children. The consumer revolution is now under way in urban China as well (Davis 2000).

Globalisation

Globalisation as a concept became popular in the 1990s, though its meanings are varied. However, the international flows of information, capital and people are all central to it, with studies of the internationalisation of Japanese corporations multiplying, including electronics (Sedgwick 2000), retail outlets (Wong 1999) and banks (Sakai 1999). In the case of migration from China,

more attention has been paid to the resulting business networks (Chan 2000), and the varied degree of assimilation in host countries (Hodder 1996), as well as the impact of these migrants on their societies back home (Watson 1975, 1977).

Conclusions: the boundaries of economic anthropology

In this brief survey, I have barely scratched the surface of the vast amount of work on production, exchange and consumption being carried out in contemporary East Asia, which is increasingly difficult to keep track of. The boundaries of economic anthropology have eroded to the point at which it is questionable whether it means very much any more as a disciplinary category. Given the nature of the literature, I suspect that in the future more and more university courses will be based on issues or countries rather than conventional disciplines, and so the focus will shift to interdisciplinary studies of tourism, migration, the environment and so forth in a single region or country. It no longer makes much sense to write about Chinese consumption, for instance, without reference to the wider political and economic literature on China, given that the goods consumed are controlled largely by state policies, production units and retail channels. But even in the capitalist countries, economic behaviour is largely constrained by the state through planning, taxation, zoning, regulation of large and small companies, subsidies, import regulations and the manipulation of the exchange rate.

Whatever happens in academe, the signs are that the East Asian economy as a whole, and particularly that of China, will continue to grow rapidly in comparison with Europe and North America, resulting in more diversification, more change and, in some instances, more economic polarisation between the rich and the poor. Where the limits to growth might lie is not yet clear. An increasing shortage of energy due to pressure on world oil reserves, or a falloff in agricultural production because of air pollution or deteriorating climate, could spell serious trouble for the region as a whole in the future, and especially for China, by far the largest country. As the economic crisis of 1997–98 demonstrated, there is now a single global economy, and no single region is insulated from major events happening on the other side of the globe. The result of all this is that the only thing certain in the economy of the future is uncertainty.

References

Allison, A. 1994. *Nightwork: sexuality, pleasure, and corporate masculinity in a Tokyo hostess club*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Bishop, R. and L.S. Robinson 1998. *Night market*. London: Routledge.

Bornoff, N. 1991. *Pink samurai*. New York: Pocket Books.

Bray, F. 1986. *The rice economies*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Brinton, M.C. 1993. *Women and the economic miracle*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Broadbent, J. 1998. *Environmental politics in Japan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Brown, L. 2000. *Sex slaves*. London: Virago.
Bruun, O. 1993. *Business and bureaucracy in a Chinese city*. Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California.
Chan, K.B. 2000. *Chinese business networks: state, economy and culture.* Singapore: Prentice-Hall, Pearson Education Asia.
Chiu, S.W.K. and T. Liu 1998. The role of the state in economic development. In *Economic dynamism in the Asia Pacific* (ed.) G. Thompson. London: Routledge.
Chua, B. (ed.) 2000. *Consumption in Asia.* London: Routledge.
Clammer, J. 1997. *Contemporary urban Japan.* Oxford: Blackwell.
Constantine, P. 1993. *Japan's sex trade.* Tokyo: Charles Tuttle.
Cwiertka, K. with B. Walraven (eds) 2001. *Asian food: the global and the local*. London: Curzon.
Davis, D. (ed.) 2000. *The consumer revolution in urban China.* Berkeley: University of California Press.
Eades, C., J.S. Eades, Y. Nishiyama and H. Yanase 2000. Houses of everlasting bliss: globalization and the production of Buddhist altars in Hikone. In *Globalization and social change in contemporary Japan* (eds) J.S. Eades, T. Gill and H. Befu. Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press.
Eades, J.S. 1999. High-speed growth, politics and the environment in East and Southeast Asia. In *Integrated environmental management* (eds) Y. Itakura, F.M. D'Itri, J.S. Eades, M. Kawashima, S. Endoh and H. Kitamura. Boca Raton, Fl.: Lewis.
Eades, J.S. 2002. Economic miracles and megacities: the Japanese model and urbanization in East and Southeast Asia. In *Understanding the city* (eds) J. Eade and C. Mele. Oxford: Blackwell.
Edmonds, R.L. (ed.) 1998. *Managing the Chinese environment.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Edwards, W. 1989. *Modern Japan through its weddings.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Endicott, S. 1988. *Red earth.* London: I.B. Tauris.
Fukuoka, Y. 2000. *Lives of young Koreans in Japan.* Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press.
Gao, M.C.F. 1999. *Gao village.* London: Hurst.
Gates, H. 1996. *China's motor.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
Gill, T. 2001. *Men of uncertainty.* Albany: State University of New York Press.
Goldstein-Gidoni, O. 1997. *Packaged Japaneseness: weddings, business and brides*. London: Curzon.
Guldin, G.E. 2001. *What's a peasant to do?* Boulder, Colo.: Westview.
Han, M. 2001. *Social change and continuity in a village in northern Anhui, China*. Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology.
Havens, T. 1994. *Architects of affluence.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Council for East Asian Studies.
Hendry, J. 2000. *The Orient strikes back.* Oxford: Berg.
Hendry, J. and M. Raveri (eds) 2002. *Japan at play.* London: Routledge.
Herbert, W. 1996. *Foreign workers and law enforcement in Japan*. London: Routledge.
Herbert, W. 2000. The *yakuza* and the law. In *Globalization and social change in contemporary Japan* (eds) J.S. Eades, T. Gill and H. Befu. Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press.
Hirsch, P. and C. Warren (eds) 1998. *The politics of environment in Southeast Asia: resources and resistance*. London: Routledge.
Hodder, R. 1996. *Merchant princes of the East.* Chichester: Wiley.
Huang, P.C.C. 1989. *The peasant family and rural development in the Yangzi Delta 1350–1988.* New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.
Huang, S. 1989. *The spiral road.* Boulder, Colo.: Westview.
Hunter, J. (ed.) 1993. *Japanese women working.* London: Routledge.
Ikels, C. 1996. *The return of the god of wealth.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Jing, J. (ed.) 2000. *Feeding China's little emperors.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Johnson, C. 1982. *MITI and the Japanese miracle.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Judd, E.R. 1994. *Gender and power in rural China.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Kelliher, D. 1992. *Peasant power in China.* New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.
Kinsella, S. 2000. *Adult manga.* London: Curzon.

Knight, J. 2003. Repopulating the village? In *Demographic change and the family in Japan's ageing society* (eds) J.W. Traphagen and J. Knight. Albany: State University of New York Press.
Komai, H. 1995. *Migrant workers in Japan.* London: Kegan Paul International.
Kondo, D.K. 1990. *Crafting selves.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Leith, D. 2003. *The politics of power.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
Linhart, S. and S. Früstück (eds) 1998. *The culture of Japan as seen through its leisure.* Albany: State University of New York Press.
Liu, X. 2000. *In one's own shadow.* Berkeley: University of California Press.
Loiskandl, H. 1995. Illegal migrant workers in Japan. In *The Cambridge survey of world migration* (ed.) R. Cohen. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
MacPherson, K.L. 1998. *Asian department stores.* London: Curzon.
McCormack, G. 1996. *The emptiness of Japanese affluence.* Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.
McCreery, J. 2000. *Japanese consumer behaviour.* London: Curzon.
McKean, M. 1981. *Environmental protest and citizen politics in Japan.* Berkeley: University of California Press.
Moeran, B. 1996. *A Japanese advertising agency.* London: Curzon.
Moeran, B. 1997. *Folk-art potters of Japan.* London: Curzon.
Moeran, B. (ed.) 2001. *Asian media productions.* London: Curzon.
Mulgan, A.G. 1999. *The politics of agriculture in Japan.* London: Routledge.
Noguchi, P. 1990. *Delayed departures, overdue arrivals.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
Ogasawara, Y. 1998. *Office ladies and salaried men.* Berkeley: University of California Press.
Oh, I. 1999. *Mafioso, big business and the financial crisis.* Aldershot: Ashgate.
Parrenas, R.S. 2001. *Servants of globalization.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Picard, M. and R.E. Wood (eds) 1997. *Tourism, ethnicity and the state in Asian and Pacific society.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
Potter, S.H. and J.M. Potter 1990. *China's peasants.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Raz, A.E. 1999. *Riding the black ships: Japan and Tokyo Disneyland.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Asia Center.
Roberson, J. 1998. *Japanese working class lives.* London: Routledge.
Roberts, G.F. 1994. *Staying on the line.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
Rohlen, T. 1974. *For harmony and strength.* Berkeley: University of California Press.
Ryang, S. 1997. *North Koreans in Japan.* Boulder, Colo.: Westview.
Sakai, J. 1999. *Japanese bankers in the City of London.* London: Routledge.
Salaff, J.W. 1995. *Working daughters of Hong Kong.* New York: Columbia University Press.
Sedgwick, M.W. 2000. The globalizations of Japanese managers. In *Globalization and social change in contemporary Japan* (eds) J.S. Eades, T. Gill and H. Befu. Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press.
Sidel, J. 1999. *Capital, coercion, and crime.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Siu, H.F. 1989. *Agents and victims in South China.* New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.
Smil, V. 1993. *China's environmental crisis.* Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.
Stevens, C. 1997. *On the margins of Japanese society.* London: Routledge.
Suzuki, H. 2000. *The price of death.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Tsuda, T. 2003. *Strangers in the homeland.* New York: Columbia University Press.
Turner, C.L. 1995. *Japanese workers in protest.* Berkeley: University of California Press.
Watson, J.L. 1975. *Emigration and the Chinese lineage.* Berkeley: University of California Press.
Watson, J.L. 1977. The Chinese: Hong Kong villagers in the British catering trade. In *Between two cultures* (ed.) J.L. Watson. Oxford: Blackwell.
Watson, J.L. (ed.) 1997. *Golden Arches East: McDonald's in East Asia.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Weiner, M. 1994. *Race and migration in Imperial Japan.* London: Routledge.
Whittaker, D.H. 1997. *Small firms in the Japanese economy.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Wong, H.W. 1999. *Japanese bosses, Chinese workers.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
Woo-Cumings, M. (ed.) 1999. *The developmental state.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
Yamashita, S. 2003. *Bali and beyond.* Oxford: Berghahn.

Yamashita, S., K. Din and J.S. Eades (eds) 1997. *Tourism and cultural development in Asia and Oceania.* Bangit, Malaysia: UKM Press.
Yan, Y. 1996. *The flow of gifts.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Zhou, M. and J. Gatewood (eds) 2000. *Contemporary Asian America.* New York: New York University Press.

35 Postsocialist societies

Chris Hann

The term 'postsocialism' is used primarily with reference to the former Soviet Union and its Eastern European allies, where socialist rule disintegrated in the years 1989–91. Self-proclaimed socialist governments have existed in other parts of the world and some of the varieties have been investigated by anthropologists (Hann 1993a), but the discussion here will be focused on Eurasia. Even here there is considerably variety. For some comparative purposes it makes sense to include China and Vietnam, where reform processes have led to changes almost as dramatic as those in the former Soviet bloc.

Although some countries of the region were open to Western anthropologists in the socialist period, access improved greatly almost everywhere in the 1990s. The 'transition' has been investigated not only by scholars with experience of socialist antecedents, but also by young newcomers to the field. This has generated a sense of excitement and even occasional, no doubt exaggerated claims that investigations of postsocialism might open up a new phase in the discipline, analogous to the focus on colonial African societies and on Melanesia by past generations. The postsocialist space is vast and the spectrum of anthropological work here is very wide. Even within economic anthropology, the range of this work is considerable. It deserves attention not only within the discipline but also among other social scientists, particularly those whose models and predictions have been refuted by recalcitrant realities. After brief outlines of general theoretical, descriptive and applied contributions, I shall highlight some of the specific topics where the contribution has been strongest.

The general theory of socialism and transition

Only a few anthropologists have attempted comprehensive theoretical accounts of socialism and its aftermath. Probably the most influential is Katherine Verdery (see 1996 for a selection of key papers). Her model of 'bureaucratic redistribution' (arguably biased by her close familiarity with the particular case of Romania) attributes the economic shortcomings of socialism to the structures of central planning and the power strategies of functionaries trapped in its political hierarchy. Many Western economists (and Eastern dissidents, on whose work Verdery explicitly drew) had similar diagnoses. Many also believed that they had a ready answer: the import of proven

Western models based on the free market, private property, a strong 'third sector' and the like. Verdery, however, was one of the first to criticise the teleology of any theory postulating a more or less smooth trajectory of 'transition' to a familiar destination. She insisted that paths of transformation would be profoundly shaped not only by significant differences in the experience of socialism but by a multitude of variables, including the strategies of both elites and the new dispossessed, those struggling to maintain some coherence in their daily lives.

Caroline Humphrey was the only Western anthropologist to publish a detailed analysis of a Soviet collective farm (1998 [1983]). She revisited this community before reissuing the study in 1998, and both here and in other writings (key papers are gathered together in Humphrey 2002) has offered theoretical insight as well as ethnographic documentation of the main changes of the first postsocialist decade in Russia. Her account emphasises economic disintegration. As the institutions of central planning collapsed, the industrial enterprises and large farms of the old system found themselves exposed as 'icebergs' in an environment lacking not only functioning markets but also basic public order and rule of law. Part of the gap was filled rapidly by various forms of 'mafia'. Meanwhile, the former enterprises did their best to make direct deals, often preferring barter to cash. The leaders of these quasi-feudal 'suzerainties' were of course interested in converting their socialist political credentials into economic capital, but some were also motivated by the wish to preserve the jobs and welfare of the workforce. Humphrey shows convincingly (again there is perhaps a bias to the particular regions where she has done fieldwork) that the dominant values of the society were profoundly incompatible with the privatisation policies introduced by Russia's new political and economic elites after 1991. Like most anthropologists, she pleads for a better understanding of local voices and values; yet her analysis shows that many former Soviet citizens remain attached to their 'hoary' socialist values, which are now responsible for 'vicious cycles' that can lead to violence. When political units repress trade, they create greater market incentives for those prepared to take risks, which leads in turn to ever greater resentment of those who profit from 'speculation'.

Coping with devastation

Verdery and Humphrey are exceptional among the anthropologists of postsocialism in the extent to which they have sought to use ethnographic detail to build up stimulating theoretical models of both socialism and postsocialism. They have drawn on each other's work, and generally complement each other both regionally and thematically. Other fieldworkers of the 1990s have tended to content themselves with detailed ethnographic accounts of the everyday coping strategies of postsocialist citizens whose

worlds underwent rapid change, usually for the worse, as a result of deindustrialisation and decollectivisation. While anthropologists in other parts of the world have documented the impact of particular environmental disasters or the failure of a particular set of institutions, the ethnographic corpus of postsocialism is unique in terms of the size of the area affected and the all-encompassing character of the disruption. Among useful collections of studies with significant economic materials are Anderson and Pine (1995), Arnstberg and Borén (2003), Bridger and Pine (1998), Burawoy and Verdery (1999), Hann (2002) and Hann and the Property Relations Group (2003).

These volumes offer many illustrations of the 'everyday economy'. The topics covered include widening social inequalities, residential segregation, continuity and change in the informal economy, the ritual economy and the significance of kin and friendship networks and 'trust' in everyday life (this last topic is treated in detail in Torsello 2003). If any generalisation can be made about this literature, it is that almost all authors, while emphasising the disabling impact of externally-induced change, also give recognition, at least implicitly, to the creativity and 'agency' of the actors as they search out new ways of living, new subsistence strategies, alternative consumption patterns and the like. This applies across the board, in 'peripheral' zones where extremes of climate and ecology constrain the possibilities for change (as among hunters and herders in Siberia; Anderson 2000) as well as in capital cities where the economic changes tend to be more conspicuous. An example of adaptive change is provided in the work of Michael Stewart (2002) on Gypsies in central Europe. Contrary to those who portray this minority as an 'underclass' whose social condition has worsened under postsocialism due to their structural disadvantages as a racialised minority, Stewart demonstrates that some Gypsies have found new paths to advancement. We should not see them as excluded from the wider society; on the contrary, they are capable of drawing on traditional cultural resources and using social networks to protect and consolidate their economic position. This theme of 'network society' has been popular under postsocialism, though it must be admitted that we still lack a satisfying overall account. While some people may become increasingly dependent on relatively small networks in order to make ends meet, others may have difficulty, due for example to higher transportation costs, in maintaining the economic networks they used in the socialist past. To resolve these issues empirically requires more collaboration with economic sociologists than has so far taken place.

A related classical topic raised in numerous descriptions of postsocialist settings concerns gift practices. In some locations (such as rural Bulgaria; Creed 2002) postsocialist poverty is inhibiting expenditure on ritual, while in others (such as Kazakhstan; Werner 1999) there has been an efflorescence of gift and ritual activity, which the anthropologist attributes to a strategy to

sustain a social network that is vital for long-term social security. Brandtstädter (2003) has argued similarly for a wealthy region of China: contrary to modernisation theory, expenditure on apparently 'non-productive' rituals has continuously increased. Brandtstädter interprets this as investment in personal relations, and attributes such practices to a continuing deep lack of trust in the state.

Aid and intervention

Given the extent of their economic difficulties and their political significance, it was only to be expected that the postsocialist states would become the objects of Western aid policies. Anthropologists have documented the political conditions sometimes attached to aid: for instance, USAID resources were channelled towards privately-owned orchards in Bulgaria, but could not be used for property that was still in cooperative ownership or use, even though this was the preference of Bulgarian villagers themselves (Wedel and Creed 1997). At the macro-societal level, Janine Wedel (1998) has shown how the transfer of large sums of aid is beset with clientelism, corruption and difficulties of cultural translation on all sides. Much of her ethnography was carried out in the form of interviews with leading officials, economists, politicians and the like. This is a far cry from traditional economic anthropology, but Wedel's work is a good example of how anthropologists can shed fresh light on both the mechanisms of the aid business and the emergent structures of the postsocialist state.

As elsewhere in the world, some anthropologists have made close-up studies of non-governmental organisations as principal vehicles of intervention in recent years. Some scholars have found it convenient to work very closely with such organisations, whose local leaders tend to be highly educated but, for one reason or another, prefer a career in the new 'third sector' to the state or commercial sectors. Some accounts suggest that the rhetoric of 'civil society' often fails to carry conviction in the postsocialist countries, where many people remain reluctant to accept that the new voluntary organisations can substitute for the comprehensive range of welfare and security functions previously provided by the state and institutions such as industrial enterprises and collective farms. A further problem is that most attempts by Western agencies to train local elites have led only to their emigration; they become unaffordable and deeply uncomfortable in their native countries (Sampson 2002).

Property relations, moral economy and gender

Property issues have been of central emotional as well as economic significance to many postsocialist citizens. The general thrust of Western advice has been to privatise resources, following the neoliberal economic logic

according to which only exclusive individual ownership and alienability of resources can provide the right incentives for their efficient use. Anthropologists have countered by pointing out that privatisation may, under certain conditions, have negative environmental consequences (for the case of herders in Inner Mongolia, see Sneath 2000). They have emphasised that holding legal title may be of little value if other legal and economic conditions are not fulfilled, and they have drawn attention to important non-economic aspects of property (see Hann, Property chap. 7 supra). For example, the importance of ownership for recovering valued symbolic identities lost under socialism was documented by Hann (1993b). Again, some of the most cogent theoretical contributions on this topic have come from Verdery (for example, Burawoy and Verdery 1999; Verdery 2003). She has emphasised the need to place property rights in a wider context of obligations and duties, and pointed out that many of the 'goods' which passed into the hands of private owners turned out to be 'bads', i.e. liabilities. This may be due to unfavourable world market conditions or simply a consequence of the collapse of the integrated socialist system, which undercut the economic value of even new and sound items of capital equipment (see Alexander 2004).

A high proportion of property studies under postsocialism have concentrated on rural communities, and in particular on the restitution of land and the privatisation of large socialist farms. Both collective and state farms were for the most part split up. The very fact that the distinction between *kolkhoz* and *sovkhoz* often had a close bearing on postsocialist outcomes is an indicator that legal forms of property holding were not entirely without significance under socialism. The detailed outcomes have been analysed by a team of fieldworkers (Hann and the Property Relations Group 2003) who have highlighted both threats to the rural 'moral economy' and the myriad ways in which established habits prove resilient. The data collected offer little support for the new property regime on the ground; rather, as Sturgeon and Sikor (2004) have commented in summarising another set of postsocialist case studies (including China and Vietnam as well as Bulgaria and Albania), what is remarkable is 'the extent to which rural people reject individualized private property rights'. Sturgeon and Sikor recognise affinities between the fuzziness of postsocialist property rights and the 'ambiguities' of land tenure systems in other parts of the world. The postsocialist cases differ, they argue, not only in the speed and extent of the transformation but above all in the withdrawal or collapse of the state's power to regulate property. They emphasise the opportunities which thereby emerge for new elites.

Some studies have suggested that the new elites consist largely of former communist leaders who have converted the bases of their power. Martha Lampland (2002) has shown how connections established in the socialist period may provide a form of social capital critical to postsocialist success.

Other studies (e.g. Thelen 2003) suggest that this variable may not always be decisive. Michal Buchowski (1997) finds the concept of class helpful in his analysis of 'reluctant capitalists' in rural Poland, which never experienced mass collectivisation. Overall, the rural case studies are full of suggestive materials which question the more ambitious sociological generalisations about the 'winners' and 'losers' of postsocialism. Precisely because property relations are embedded in other domains of social and cultural existence, it is unlikely that the current unidirectional postsocialist property reforms will lead to similar consequences throughout Eurasia. It is not even safe to conclude that collective forms of property holding have everywhere made way for more individualist and less egalitarian patterns: Thomas Sikor's (2004) work among the Black Thai of Vietnam reveals a case in which local people were able to resist changes of this kind, though he concedes that this case is highly exceptional.

Several studies have drawn attention to the difficulties faced by new private farmers, who may attract the envy of others in the community (echoing earlier theories of 'limited good' in studies of peasant economy) because they diverge from the norms of the moral economy. They may legitimate their wealth by a donation to the community in the form of renovating its church (Hivon 1995). Elsewhere, however, private farmers have been more readily accepted, especially when their success can be visibly attributed to their own hard work rather than to corruption or speculation. The universal dilemmas of entrepreneurship arise in vivid forms under postsocialism. How can new shopkeepers withhold credit from poor customers, in communities which have not previously experienced any need for informal credit? Such questions lead us again deep into kinship and social networks, but they have not yet been addressed adequately in the postsocialist literature.

The long-term absence of household members who now earn money in the West to sustain families in the postsocialist home is one of many factors affecting gender relationships. Thelen (2003) found that the new property regime in rural Hungary has made men the de facto owners of land. Even if title is often formally held by women, in effect land privatisation has brought a return to an older patriarchal division of labour and farm management. In the comparative literature on the sexual division of labour and gender asymmetries, postsocialism does seem to be a distinctive case. Without romanticising the achievements of socialism, it is clear that in most countries the participation of women in the labour market reached high levels, even in the countryside; while they continued to hold the major responsibilities for home work and caring, the domestic workload was alleviated by state provision that was often much superior to the services provided by wealthier states in the West. Under postsocialism women have suffered from the contraction in public provision, and they have often been the first to lose their

jobs as newly-privatised firms adapt to the rules of the new market. One of the leading analysts of these processes, Frances Pine (2002), speaks of a 'withdrawal to the household'; she notes that, while this domain is a source of pride and identity for women, many in both town and countryside feel profoundly betrayed by the postsocialist reversal to gender inequalities they thought they had transcended (see also Gal and Kligman 2000).

Money, markets and consumption

We have already seen that the sphere of exchange, central to economic anthropology from its inception, has been prominent in postsocialist studies. It is important not to exaggerate the affinities of socialist economies to the differentiated spheres of exchange identified by anthropologists in tribal societies. For the most part, the socialist states were modernising industrial states in which all citizens were thoroughly familiar with the use of money in their everyday lives. None the less, alongside agricultural land a great many other goods and services were not treated as market commodities under socialism. Housing, for example, was allocated to the urban population using non-market criteria. Given strict controls over which consumer goods were to be produced at all and recurrent shortages, even in the more successful socialist economies the purely economic options available for the deployment of money were smaller than is the case in capitalist economies. This same fact contributed to money's potent symbolic significance, which has persisted under postsocialism.

Although few have attempted to apply the concepts of Karl Polanyi and his substantivist school (see Isaac chap. 1 supra) in this context, the extension of the realm of 'general-purpose money' and of the 'market principle' to sectors previously governed by a principle of 'redistribution' have been among the most contentions and problematic aspects of postsocialist transformation. Even before the Russian currency collapsed, Humphrey had shown how it was failing to fulfil the alleged prime function of money, to serve as a medium of exchange. While Humphrey (2000, 2002) highlighted the development of barter as an alternative to money payments, Lemon (1998) has investigated cultural dimensions of currency collapse. She showed how the debasement of the rouble was associated with anxieties, shared by communists and nationalists alike, over selling 'national substances' too cheaply to foreigners. The obsessional interest of many Russians in physical details of the American dollar has become a part of their imaginative search for a new 'essence of value'. More concretely, Lemon demonstrated that, although holding a foreign currency had become legal, not everyone in postsocialist Moscow could use dollars in the same way. Romani and other 'foreign' groups were associated with counterfeit currency: in this sense 'there is no "general-purpose Money", after all' (1998: 46). Verdery's study of pyramid schemes in Romania showed

how a population unfamiliar with basic principles of saving and banking could be easily seduced onto a roller-coaster ride to economic ruin. Analogies with cargo cults in Oceania do not seem far-fetched in this case. On the other hand, the turbulence of world stock markets in recent years and cases such as Enron should remind us of the need for caution before we argue too strongly for the uniqueness of the pyramids and spirals of postsocialism. Neither socialism nor postsocialism can be neatly modelled as a mirror image of capitalism.

While some forms of market played an important role under socialism, notably in the distribution of farm produce from the private plots, both the scope of the market principle and the visibility of traders have increased in most parts of the postsocialist world. Hertz (1998) is a rich ethnographic study of 'stock fever' in Shanghai in the early 1990s: the rapid rise and fall of the stock market in this 'reform socialist' economy provide insight into China's peculiar mixture of 'tributary' and 'petty capitalist' modes of production. Hann (1992) gives an early account of local responses to new forms of market in the Hungarian case. Konstantinov (1997) provides one of the first analyses of a distinctive postsocialist phenomenon, the 'trader-tourist'. His subjects are Bulgarians who take advantage of the new freedom to travel by participating in organised bus trips to Istanbul, whose main purpose is small-scale trading. The main hazards are the deals that need to be struck with custom officers and other officials, if the entire 'picaresque' adventure is to produce a profit. Hann and Bellér-Hann (1998) consider similar phenomena in the context of Turkey's Black Sea coast border with Georgia. In addition to an explosion of petty trading, this border was conspicuous also for traffic of other kinds, notably prostitution. Indeed, from sex workers to organ transplants, the 'free markets' of the West seem to have had a dramatic impact on some of the poorest sections of postsocialist society. Mandel and Humphrey (2002) provide further illustrations and moral commentaries on a wide range of market-related phenomena.

Work on postsocialist consumption patterns, while reflecting more general tendencies in recent economic anthropology, also directs attention to aspects not found elsewhere. These concern not only the suddenness with which citizens were exposed to a dazzling range of consumer goods but also the basic change of principle that 'overnight' made all goods potentially available to all – provided one had the money to buy. Numerous studies have shown how people use goods to construct and display their new social identities. Again, Humphrey has been a pioneer, as with her analyses of the villas built by the 'new Russians' and the tastes they reflect (Humphrey 2002).

It is especially interesting in this context to look to China, where the expansion of consumerism has occurred somewhat more gradually. Latham (2002) has examined the role of the media in promoting new goods and the habits associated with them. Watson (1997) has led a team investigation of

how McDonald's, often perceived as a symbol of 'culture-blind' globalisation, in fact adapts its practices to local contexts. The image and experience of eating hamburgers in postsocialist Beijing is in some respects quite the opposite of the image and experience offered by the corporation in America. The main point here, that the homogenising forces of international political economy are always modified by specific local or national factors, is of course one that anthropologists and others have analysed elsewhere in the world.

Conclusion

Postsocialism is an instructive setting in which to revisit classical issues in economic anthropology, to open up some new ones and to reflect on the relationship between the disciplines. Neoliberal orientations grounded in rational-choice models that assume utility-maximising individuals as agents have failed to provide adequate predictions and descriptions of this so-called 'transition'. Anthropologists can offer more realistic analyses which engage with the embeddedness of the economy, recognise the complexity of decision taking, and the impossibility of changing values and assumptions overnight. In short, postsocialism highlights the contrasting levels at which economists and anthropologists study economic phenomena and the need to involve the latter, and to take seriously the lessons of detailed and small-scale analysis, in preparing advice to policy makers.

The demise of the Soviet bloc was a remarkable moment in world history, but there is no need to reify this moment as it disappears into history. We must be careful not to exaggerate the rupture, just as we need to avoid exaggerating the contrast between capitalist and socialist systems before 1989. The value of the anthropological contribution often consists in pointing to the continuities accompanying change. Some postsocialist practices in the informal economy, for example, might be attributable to the specific birth pangs of a new order; but even these may have their antecedents in socialist practices, while some may be traced back to even older cultural notions and strategies. Conclusive generalisations about changes in informal economic practices during and after socialism may prove impossible; many economic anthropologists can do no better than endorse the neo-institutionalist notion of 'path dependency'. Similar problems arise in generalising about the winners of decollectivisation: are they those who can draw upon their social capital as ex-socialist farm managers, or their cultural capital as the children and grandchildren of prosperous peasants, or possibly some combination of the two? Again, it is often argued that postsocialist citizens manipulate social networks to alleviate their economic difficulties, and that the latter might directly or indirectly be contributing to processes of ethnic closure. But Verdery (1993) showed that ethnicity was also an important mechanism for dealing with the shortages of the old centrally planned economy. So the questions arise: when precisely do

postsocialist networks open up, and when do they narrow? Has the demise of socialism really transformed the use of networks in the perception of the actors, and/or in some external analytic sense?

These and many other questions have yet to be addressed adequately. The often contradictory evidence emerging from case studies has yet to be synthesised and integrated into the general theory of economic anthropology and the multidisciplinary corpus of 'transition studies'.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Frances Pine, Thomas Sikor and Michael Stewart for helpful comments on an earlier draft.

References

Alexander, C. 2004. Value, relations and changing bodies: privatization and property rights in Kazakhstan. In *Property in question: value transformation in the global economy* (eds) K. Verdery and C. Humphrey. Oxford: Berg.

Anderson, D.G. 2000. *Identity and ecology in Arctic Siberia: the Number One Reindeer Brigade*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Anderson, D.G. and F. Pine (eds) 1995. *Surviving the transition*. *Cambridge Anthropology* 18 (2) Special issue.

Arnstberg, K.-O. and T. Borén (eds) 2003. *Everyday economy in Russia, Poland and Latvia*. Stockholm: Södertörns högskola.

Brandtstädter, S. 2003. The moral economy of kinship and property in Southern China. In *The postsocialist agrarian question: property relations and the rural condition* (eds) C.M. Hann and the Property Relations Group. Münster: LIT Verlag.

Bridger, S. and F. Pine (eds) 1998. *Surviving post-socialism: local strategies and regional resources in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union*. London: Routledge.

Buchowski, M. 1997. *Reluctant capitalists: class and culture in a local community in western Poland*. Berlin: Centre Marc Bloch.

Burawoy, M. and K. Verdery (eds) 1999. *Uncertain transition: ethnographies of change in the postsocialist world*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield.

Creed, G.W. 2002. Economic crisis and ritual decline in Eastern Europe. In *Postsocialism: ideals, ideologies and practices in Eurasia* (ed.) C.M. Hann. London: Routledge.

Gal, S. and G. Kligman (eds) 2000. *The politics of gender after socialism: comparative–historical essay*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Hann, C. 1992. Market principle, market-place and the transition in Eastern Europe. In *Contesting markets: analyses of ideology, discourse and practice* (ed.) R. Dilley. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Hann, C. (ed.) 1993a. *Socialism: ideals, ideologies and local practice*. London: Routledge.

Hann, C. 1993b. From production to property: decollectivisation and the family-land relationship in contemporary Hungary. *Man* 28: 299–320.

Hann, C. (ed.) 2002. *Postsocialism: ideals, ideologies and practices in Eurasia*. London: Routledge.

Hann, C. and I. Bellér-Hann 1998. Markets, morality and modernity in north-east Turkey. In *Border identities: nation and state at international frontiers* (eds) T.M. Wilson and H. Donnan. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hann, C. and the Property Relations Group 2003. *The postsocialist agrarian question: property relations and the rural condition*. Münster: LIT Verlag.

Hertz, E. 1998. *The trading crowd: an ethnography of the Shanghai stock market*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hivon, M. 1995. Local resistance to privatization in rural Russia. *Cambridge Anthropology* 18 (2) Special issue: 13–22.

Humphrey, C. 1998 (1983). *Marx went away – but Karl stayed behind.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
Humphrey, C. 2000, How is barter done? The social relations of barter in provincial Russia. In *The vanishing rouble; barter networks and non-monetary transactions in post-Soviet societies* (ed.) P. Seabright. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Humphrey, C. 2002. *The unmaking of Soviet life: everyday economics after socialism.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
Konstantinov, Y. 1997. Patterns of reinterpretation: trader-tourism in the Balkans (Bulgaria) as a picaresque metaphorical enactment of post-totalitarianism. *American Ethnologist* 23: 762–82.
Lampland, M. 2002. The advantages of being collectivized: cooperative farm managers in the postsocialist economy. In *Postsocialism: ideals, ideologies and practices in Eurasia* (ed.) C.M. Hann. London: Routledge.
Latham, K. 2002. Rethinking Chinese consumption: social palliatives and the rhetorics of transition in postsocialist China. In *Postsocialism: ideals, ideologies and practices in Eurasia* (ed.) C.M. Hann. London: Routledge.
Lemon, A. 1998. 'Your eyes are green like dollars': counterfeit cash, national substance and currency apartheid in 1990s Russia. *Cultural Anthropology* 13 (1): 22–55.
Mandel, R. and C. Humphrey 2002. *Markets and moralities: ethnographies of postsocialism.* Oxford: Berg.
Pine, F. 2002. Retreat to the household? Gendered domains in postsocialist Poland. In *Postsocialism: ideals, ideologies and practices in Eurasia* (ed.) C.M. Hann. London: Routledge.
Sampson, S. 2002. Beyond transition. Rethinking elite configurations in the Balkans. In *Postsocialism: ideals, ideologies and practices in Eurasia* (ed.) C.M. Hann. London: Routledge.
Sikor, T. 2004. Conflicting concepts: contested land relations in north-western Vietnam. *Conservation and Society* 2: forthcoming.
Sneath, D. 2000. *Changing Inner Mongolia: pastoral Mongolian society and the Chinese state.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Stewart, M. 2002. Deprivation, the Roma and the underclass. In *Postsocialism: ideals, ideologies and practices in Eurasia* (ed.) C.M. Hann. London: Routledge.
Sturgeon, J. and T. Sikor 2004. Introduction: postsocialist property in Asia and Europe – variations on 'fuzziness'. *Conservation and Society* 2: forthcoming.
Thelen, T. 2003. *Privatisierung und soziale Ungleichheit in der osteuropäischen Landwirtschaft: Zwei Fallstudien aus Ungarn und Rumänien.* Frankfurt a.M.: Campus.
Torsello, D. 2003. *Trust, property and social change in a southern Slovakian village.* Münster: LIT Verlag.
Verdery, K. 1993. Ethnic relations, economies of shortage, and the transition in Eastern Europe. In *Socialism: ideals, ideologies* (ed.) C.M. Hann. London: Routledge.
Verdery, K. 1996. *What was socialism, and what comes next?* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Verdery, K. 2003. *The vanishing hectare: property and value in postsocialist Transylvania.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
Watson, J.L. (ed.) 1997. *Golden Arches East; McDonald's in East Asia.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Wedel, J. 1998. *Collision and collusion: the strange case of Western aid to Eastern Europe.* New York: St. Martin's Press.
Wedel, J. and G.W. Creed 1997. Second thoughts from the second world: interpreting aid in post communist Eastern Europe. *Human Organisation* 56: 253-64.
Werner, C. 1999. The dynamics of feasting and gift exchange in rural Kazakhstan. In *Contemporary Kazaks: cultural and social perspectives* (ed.) I. Svanberg. London: Curzon.

Index

Abolafia, M. 183
aboriginal economies 20
Abu-Lughod, L. 515
accounting paradigms 464–6
acculturation 358
accumulation 31, 33–4, 396, 400
action anthropology 482
actions
  individualist models 138
  and meanings 450–452, 453
  and practice theory 136
  and thought 137
  and values 306, 450–452, 453, 465
actors
  and rational choice 94–5, 104, 445
  utility maximisation 66–7, 74
  and values 450–452, 453
Africa
  ceremonial exchange 247, 248
  colonialism 6, 42–3, 179–80
  development organisations 477–8
  farmers 60, 341
  financial institutions 178–9
  Ju/'hoansi 197–8
  production 45–6, 47, 53, 197–8, 200–201, 327, 341
  religion 341–2, 348
  structural Marxism 42
  Tiv economy 163–4, 165
  women 327
  see also individual countries; Near East; sub-Saharan Africa
'African' mode of production 45–6, 47, 53
agrarian structure 527–8
agriculture 478, 539
  see also farming
Alexander, Catherine 463
alienable objects 235, 496, 551
alienation 145, 167, 349, 493
Allenby, B.R. 456
Altman, J. 372
altruism 328, 394
American Indians 210, 251
Americas 31, 46
Ancient Slavery 46, 47
Andean communities 220–222, 408–10, 411–18, 419
Annales school 55
anthropological perspective
  definition 1–3
  of economy 95, 105
  empirical nature 2
  idiographic nature 3
  of persons 95
  regional variation 6
anthropology
  bifurcations 20
  as a discipline 479
  funding 478–9
  methods 26
  relationship with development 476–85
  relationship with economics 194
  relationship with political economy 26–7
anti-globalisation 51
Appadurai, Arjun 86, 212, 237
Applbaum, Kalman 278
applied anthropology 472, 480–483
appropriation 202, 203–4, 496
arbitrage 417–19
Arce, A. 476
aristocracies 46
Aristotle 397
artefacts 373, 382
'articulation' school 42, 53, 505
Asia 31–2, 308–9, 311–12, 327, 349
  see also East Asia; individual countries; South Asia; Southeast Asia
'Asiatic' mode of production 45, 46, 47, 53
assembly lines 147–8, 155
Australia 243
authenticity 281
Aztecs 214

banking 185–6, 188, 311–12, 531, 554

Barbados 333–4
Barde, J.-P. 462
barley 220–221
Barnett, T. 476
barter
  and coincidence of wants 264, 265
  as commodity exchange 235, 255, 270
  and communism 266–7
  and credit 264–5, 431–2, 492
  definition 262
  as distinct exchange category 270, 273
  exchange rate 263–5, 268, 269
  and gift exchange 269–70
  and haggling 267, 268, 269, 416
  inter-business 266–7
  and money 161–3, 264–5, 266, 272
  and opportunity cost 263–4, 265
  by peasants 408, 410, 415–17, 431–2
  and risk 264–5
  and scarcity 266, 268, 269–70
  and social relations 268, 269–70
  and trade 233
  and transaction costs 263–5, 266, 268
  see also arbitrage; spheres of exchange
Barth, Frederick 355, 418, 504
base
  and capital 101
  and community 95
  definition 94
  examples of 97–8
  and knowledge and skills 98–9
  limited 100–101
  and material accumulations and services 101
  and person 102–4
  prohibited spaces 102
  property 105
  as sacra 102
  unlimited 99–100
Basso, K. 376
Bataille, Georges 400
Baudrillard, Jean 400
Becker, Gary 60–61, 122
Bell, Daniel 310
Benería, L. 62
Berger, John 428
Bernstein, H. 426
Bestor, Theodore 279–80
Beteille, A. 527–8
biomedical technologies 120, 122
Bird-David, Nurit 341–2
blat 269–70
Bloch, Maurice 164, 180, 255, 272, 394
Blum, Volkmar 414, 416
Boas, Franz 211, 212, 445
Bohannan, Paul 21, 163–4, 271–2, 405, 501, 503
Bolivia 145, 393, 394, 416, 493
Bonanno, A. 133
Bornstein, Erica 183
Boserup, Ester 327
boundaries 376–7, 378–80, 381, 382
Bourdieu, Pierre 88, 215–16
Brandt Commission report 472
Braudel, Fernand 28
Brazil 430–435, 452, 495–6
bribery 298
bridewealth 61, 241, 246–7
Britain
  anthropology 500–502, 504
  banking 311
  colonialism 42–3
  gender equality 320
  markets 284
  political economy 42–3
  race differences 360–361
  as shareholder economy 314–15
  spheres of exchange 270–271
  see also England; Scotland
Brown, Louise 540
Bruegger, Urs 184–5, 187
Brundtland report 456
Buddhism 298–9
Bulgaria 266
Burawoy, M. 148–9
bureaucracy 172, 307, 538
Burma 295
business management 530–533
businesses *see* corporations; firms; multinational corporations
Byzantine society 203–4

California 68–70
Cameroon 61–2
Campbell, Alan 490, 492
Campbell, Tom 20
Canada 118, 128, 210, 212
cannibalism 210
capital 101, 129, 130, 181, 465

capital markets 132
capitalism
  and development 474, 475, 479
  and distribution 207–8
  and ethics 399–402
  feminist critique 324
  and fetishism 48
  and feudalism 474, 475
  and gift exchange 257
  and globalisation 48, 49–50, 56, 131–5
  and indigenous people 399
  and informationalism 35
  and labour 125–6, 127, 205
  and Marxism 324
  as mode of production 48–51, 126, 204–8
  non-Western 349
  origins 310
  paradigms 391–3
  and peasants 424–5, 426, 429, 430, 436
  and private property 110–111, 112, 126, 527
  and progress 195, 308
  and redistribution 206, 207–8
  and religion 310, 345–50, 530–531
  and states 126, 129, 133
  subversion of 399–402
  and surplus 47
  theories of Karl Polanyi 14–15, 502
  and value 48–50, 194
  and values 310, 315
  and wages 126, 194
  and world-system theory 29
capitalist class 30, 47, 130, 133
capitalist production 127, 129, 131, 132
capitalist societies 204–8
Caplow, T. 258
cargo system 205–6
Caribbean 131, 182, 333–4, 431
Carlyle, Thomas 374–5
Carrier, James G. 84, 92, 255, 257, 259, 282, 351
cash value 50
caste system 342–3, 357, 449, 526, 527–9, 530–533
Castells, M. 34–8
Catholicism 346–7
Cellarius, B.A. 266
Central America 205–6
ceremonial exchange
  and barter 235–6
  Christmas 246, 248, 255–6, 258–9, 351
  and commodity exchange 235–6
  and contracts 237–8
  definition 230, 233
  globalisation 246
  and landscape organisation 374
  and life-cycle exchanges 238–41
  money 253
  and political order 230
  and prestige 233, 239, 242, 251
  and rationality 343–4
  and spheres of exchange 243, 255
  and state money 236–7
  and trade 234–5
  see also Christmas; *dan*; *gab*; gift exchange; gifts; *hau*; *kula*; *moka*; potlatch
ceremonial funds 409, 428, 429
Chakrabarty, D. 144
Chambers, R. 477
change 323–4, 496–7, 500–501, 505, 548, 549, 555–6
charity 298–9
Chase-Dunn, C. 32–4
Chayanov, A.V. 59–60, 127–8, 429
Chicago 357–8
childcare 79, 451
children 142, 292, 293, 294
China
  agriculture 539
  anti-materialism 400
  consumerism 542, 543, 554–5
  economic growth 309, 540–541, 543
  financial markets 184, 284
  gift exchange 251, 253, 256, 399
  gift to host 297
  industrial work 144–5
  mode of production 45, 554
  new technology industries 36
  trade 31, 399
Chinese 357, 361
choice 19, 85–6, 117, 63–4, 94–5, 104, 343, 395, 445
Christianity 37, 179, 180, 183, 257, 298–9, 348, 395–6, 397, 450

see also Catholicism; Christmas; Methodism; Protestantism
Christmas 246, 248, 255–6, 258–9, 350–351
Clammer, J. 541
clans 241–2, 254
class
and caste system 342–3, 528–9
consciousness 136, 144–5
and consumption 215–16
definition 130
development 200
and ethnicity 360–362
and labour 130, 528–9
and money 165
peasants 426, 427, 528–9
and relations of production 44, 46, 505
and segregation 361
in tributary states 202
and world-system theory 29–30
class warfare 130
Coca Cola 218–19
coffee production 72–4, 398–9
Cohen, A. 356
coincidence of wants 264, 265
collective ownership *see* communal ownership
Colombia 72–4, 348–9, 393, 394, 397–8, 497
colonias 206–7
colonisation
and change 505
and consumption 222
costs 31
and development 474, 476
and ethnicity 357
exchange systems 242–3, 374
and financial institution 178–80
and prosperity 32
and structural Marxism 42–3
and world-system theory 30
Comaroff, Jean 48, 181, 348
Comaroff, John 48, 181, 348
commodification 14–15, 45, 47, 276, 450
commodities
authenticity 281
and barter 235
cultural value 164–5, 280–282
and fetishism 178, 393
and gifts 235, 236–7, 242–3, 393, 394
personal value 167, 212
see also goods
commodity chains 279–82
commodity exchange 235–6, 249, 255, 267–8, 270
communal ownership 115–16, 117–18, 120, 121, 548, 551
communism 114–16, 266–7, 269–70
communities
as a base 95
definition 95
and euro 173–4
and fishing 118
and markets 96–7
material 217–19
material accumulations and services 101
and money 170–171
networks 95
and persons 102–4
and production 95
provisioning 81–3
and regulation 96, 102
and rights 112
rules 96, 100, 102
security 97, 104, 118
and shared meanings 170–171
and uncertainty 97
see also base
community identity 103
companies *see* firms
comparative economics 15–16, 502
comparative sociology 6–7
competition 316, 317, 458
conflict 27, 33, 236, 241–2
consciousness 54, 136–8, 144–5
conspicuous consumption 213, 215–16, 400
Constance, D. 133
consumer choice 85–6, 401–2
consumerism 350–351, 542, 543, 554–5
consumption
anthropological perspectives 210–211, 222–3
categorical 214–17
and colonisation 222
contractual 211–12
and culture 210

definition 211
destructive 210, 212, 400
ecological 212–14
ethics 400–402
in households 401, 405
importance 210–211, 541–2
and information 35
and peasants 410–411, 425
and politics 543
and power 220, 401–2
processual 219–22
and production 217–19, 396–7, 398–9
and social relations 83–4
structuralist models 447–8
and value 51
and waste 210, 212, 509
contained economies 397–8
contracts
and gift exchanges 233, 237–8
in labour markets 70–72
in sharecropping 68–70
with devil 145, 178, 349, 393, 394, 497
Cook, Scott 18–20
cooperative ownership *see* communal ownership
Copperbelt 358
Coquery-Vidrovitch, C. 46, 53
core states 29, 30, 33
corporations 307, 309, 313, 316
corporatism 313, 316–17
cost–benefit analysis 460–463
Costa Rica 395–7, 398–9
costs 31, 133–5, 442, 462
see also opportunity costs; transaction costs
Crapo, R.H. 342–3
credit
and barter 264, 431–2, 492
and colonisation 178–9
and gift exchange 233
and peasants 408, 410, 431–2, 493
personal 172
Creoles 356, 357, 360, 363–4
Crewe, E. 477, 484
crime 37–8
crises 89–90, 132, 311–12, 543
cultural ecology 491, 493–4, 495, 496
cultural reality 137–8
cultural studies 47–8
culture
and anthropological perspective 2, 493–4, 495
concept of 135–6
and consumption 210
definition 445
and development 55, 309–10
and ethnicity 353, 354–5, 359–60
and finance 182–3
and industrialisation 141–2
and markets 280–282, 284
and meanings 136
and money 163–5
in political economy 47–8
and power 136
and property 119
and provisioning 86
and religion 345–50
and segregation 359
and supply–market–demand 280–282
and values 308–15
'cultures of poverty' 361, 368
currency markets 36

D'Andrade, Roy 136
Dahomey 16, 502, 503
Dahya, B. 360
Dales, J.H. 468
Dalton, George 19, 20, 21, 503–4
Dalton, M. 463
dan 252, 256, 394–5
Dannhaeuser, Norbert 276, 277, 278
daughters 292
De Neve, G. 146–7
de Saussure, Ferdinand 439, 448
de-skilling 147, 148
debt
and Asian economic crises 312
and capitalism 207
and colonisation 178–9
and consumption 128, 130
and labour 146, 492–3
and peasants 424, 428, 431–2
of Third-World states 182–3
debt peonage 492–3
decision-making 59–64, 67–8
'deep structure' 55
delayed reciprocity 230–231, 292
Department for International Development (DFID) 479, 480, 485

dependency theory 28, 475, 479, 555
deregulation 36
Descola, Phillipe 494
development
  and agriculture 478
  and anthropology 476–85, 521–2
  and applied anthropology 472, 480–483, 484
  and capitalism 474, 475, 479
  and colonisation 474, 476
  concepts 472–3, 478
  and culture 55, 309–10
  definition 473–4
  and dependency theory 475, 479
  and economic growth 473, 474
  and exploitation 27–8, 475
  and feudalism 474, 475
  and finance 182–3
  and formalism 21
  and gender 332–4
  and intervention 476–7
  and modernisation theory 474–5, 478
  organisations 473, 475, 480, 550
  and post-development theory 475–6, 478
  and post-modernism 479–80
  and power 477–8, 480
  and progress 474
  projects 476–8, 484
  and radical development theory 479
  and religion 183
  see also development industry; economic growth; sustainable development; underdevelopment
development industry 473, 477–8, 480–481, 484–5, 550
devil 145, 178, 349, 393, 394, 497
dialectical materialism 51–2
disease 31, 33, 538
disembedding 14–15, 340
distribution
  and capitalism 207–8
  and exchange 195
  and income 90
  in kin-organised societies 197, 199–200, 201
  and production 194
  and provisioning 88–90
  regulation 89, 90, 91
  of surplus value 50–51
  in tributary states 202, 203–4
  see also redistribution
'domestic' 323, 324, 325, 328
domestic sector 82, 406, 407, 410–411, 413–14, 452
Douglas, B. 329
Douglas, Mary 211, 214–15
Dumont, Louis 448–50, 527
Dupré, G. 505
Durkheim, Emile 5, 6, 307
Durrenberger, E.P. 132–3, 136–8

East Asia
  agriculture 539
  consumption 541–2
  economic anthropology 537–43
  economic growth 537
  environment 538–9
  financial sector 311
  globalisation 542–3
  industrialisation 541
  migration 539–41
  new technology industries 36
  states 538
  see also individual countries; South Asia; Southeast Asia
ecological anthropology 44, 372–3
ecology 355, 491, 493–4, 495, 501–2
'economic' 15–16, 323, 324, 351
economic action 465
economic actors 63–4, 66–8
  see also households
economic anthropology
  definition 1–7, 125
  methodologies 5–6
  regional variation 6–7
  subject matter 372–3
economic development *see* development
economic growth 29, 473, 474, 537, 538–9, 540–541, 543
  see also development; development industry; sustainable development
economic history 41, 51–6
economic life 3–5
economic revolutions 307
economic theory 440–443
economics, relationship with anthropology 95, 105, 194

economies
anthropological perspective 95, 105, 195
contained 397–8
definition 372–3
disembedding 14–15, 340
in economic anthropology 4, 104–5
embedding 15, 340–341, 392
formal sector 144
GNP (gross national product) 318
informal sector 29, 144
and money 311–15
shareholder 314–17
and social relations 340–341, 372–3, 391, 392
and spheres of exchange 163–4, 165
stakeholder 314, 315–16
two realms of 95–7
and values 306–8, 315–20
Western ideas 391–2
see also base; households
economy 463–6, 467
'edge cities' 35–6
Edgeworth, F.Y. 268
Egypt 183, 517, 521–2, 523
elites 356
Elkington, J. 464
Ellen, R. 375
Elyachar, Julia 182–3, 522, 523
embeddedness 15, 184–5, 187, 324, 333, 340–341, 348, 392
empirical naturalism 3, 6
empiricism 2–3, 52–3
employment *see* labour
encompassment 448, 449
endowments 294–5
Engels, Frederick 46
England
and market capitalism 14–15
Pakistani immigrants 360
production unit 142
spheres of exchange 270–271
working classes 131
entrepreneurship 366–7, 504, 552
environment
anthropological analysis 375–6
appropriation of nature 370–371
and boundaries 376–7, 378–80, 381, 382
and economic growth 538–9, 543
and landscapes 373–5, 382
and maps 376, 377, 378, 379, 380–382
and places 375–8, 381, 382
protection 375, 379–80, 382
qualitative perspective 371, 372, 373, 376–7, 378–80
quantitative measurement 371–2, 373, 374, 376–7, 378–80
triple bottom line (3BL) assessments 463–6
value 373–4, 376, 378–80, 382
Western European perspectives 370–371
environmental policy
cost–benefit analysis 461–463
and efficiency 459
life-cycle studies 466–7
London Recycling Day case study 457–60
measurement 459, 468
microeconomic perspective 455, 456–7
timeframes 456, 458, 462
triple bottom line (3BL) assessments 463–6
visibility 458, 459, 468
equality 317, 319–20
equilibrium theory 180
Erem, Suzan 133, 136–7, 138
Eriksen, T.H. 356–7, 362–4
Escobar, A. 478, 480
ethics
anthropological perspective 390–391
and capitalism 391–3, 399–402
and consumption 400–402
definition 390
and money 393–5
moral economies 395–9
trade 396, 397, 398–9
ethnic divisions 149–51
ethnic identity 353, 356–7, 358, 359, 365–6
ethnicity
acculturation 358
and categorisation 354, 367–8
and class 360–362
in colonial societies 357
and culture 354, 359–60, 368, 353
ecological aspects 355, 357–8

economic aspects 353–4
and elites 356
and entrepreneurship 366–7
and ethnic boundaries 354, 355–6, 358, 359, 360
and globalisation 367
and immigrants 357–8, 359, 360, 362, 366
and indigenous people 364–6
and labour 357–9, 360, 361–2, 362–4, 365–7
and language 359–60, 365, 368
and networks 354, 359, 360, 363–4
in plantation societies 356–7, 360, 362–4
and pluralism 362–4
and privileges 356
segregation 357–9, 361
social mobility 360, 361, 362
stereotypes 354, 358
stigmatisation 354–5, 358, 360, 361
ethnography 6–7, 177–8, 183–7
euro 172–4
Eurocentrism 30–32, 445
Europe
colonialism 31, 32, 178–9
cultural segregation 359
and disease 31
industrial revolution 31
and Newtonian physics 371
power 220
and Tonga 199–200
trade with Asia 31
see also individual countries
European Union 172–3
Evans-Pritchard, Sir Edward 247, 445, 472
Evers, H.-D. 396
evolution 33–4, 114, 123
exchange
and colonisation 242–3, 374
and credit 264
delayed 231, 292
and distribution 195
in kin-organised societies 45
of labour 408, 409, 415, 434, 495–6
in market economies 16
in networks 33, 167
outlets 275–7
and power 291
and prestige 291
and realisation of value 50
social relations 405, 490, 492, 495–6
spheres of exchange 163–4, 165, 243, 255, 270–272, 405–6, 501, 504
in Trobriand economy 5, 17, 231
types 290–291
and world-system theory 29
see also barter; *blat*; ceremonial exchange; commodity exchange; *dan*; *gab*; gift exchange; gifts; *gimwali*; *hau*; *kula*; marketplaces; markets; money; moneystuffs; potlatch; reciprocity; tribute
exchange rate 268, 269
exchange value 49, 50, 393, 396, 448, 492
experiments 3
exploitation
and development 27, 475
of labour 29, 44, 196–7, 443, 493
in political economy 44
of poor countries by rich countries 27–8, 29
in tributary states 202

factories 131, 143–5, 146–51, 154–6
Fair Trade 80–81, 398, 402
Fairhead, James 378–80
families 36–7, 271
farming
decision-making 67–8
and development 478
and environment 376, 377–8
and gender 329
households 60, 61–2, 329
and industrial work 154–5
labour markets 70–74
by peasants 408, 424–5, 426, 429, 430, 436
in postsocialist 548, 551, 552
and property 370–371
and religion 341
sharecropping 68–70
and uncertainty 64–6
Farming Systems Research 59
fashion 222
feasts 210, 211–12, 213, 232, 234
Feld, S. 376
feminist anthropology 323–6

Fenton, S. 361
Ferguson, J. 477, 483, 484
festivities 230
fetishism 48, 178, 393, 451, 493
feudalism 46–7, 52, 53, 425–6, 474, 475, 502
fieldwork 2–3, 6, 43, 122–3
fiesta system 205–6
Figueroa, A. 412, 414, 418
finance
  anthropological interest in 176–7, 190
  attitudes towards 186
  and culture 182–3
  definition 177
  and development 182–3
  and embeddedness 184–5, 187
  and fiction 181
  forms 187–90
  and knowledge 188–90
  and market liberalisation 177
  and Marxism 181
  neoliberal development 181–3
  and numbers 187–8
  and occult 181
  offshore 181–2
  regulation 181–2
  and religion 182
  and states 181–2
  see also ceremonial funds; money; taxation
financial crises 132, 311–12, 543
financial institutions 178–80, 181–2
financial markets 177–8, 183–7, 188–9, 284
financial sector 311
firms 128, 129, 307, 313–14, 405
Firth, Sir Raymond 250, 445
Fischer, M. 479
fishing industry 117–18, 128, 356
Folbre, Nancy 328
Fonseca Martel, C. 409, 416, 418
food
  and consumption practices 213, 220–221, 542
  franchising 276–7
  gifts 65, 66
  industry 411–12
  one-way economic transfers 293, 299, 300
  peasants 410–411, 413–14, 420, 428, 432
  provisioning 78, 79–81, 89–90
  scandals 89–90
  security 78
  taboos 213, 214–15, 344
forager food-sharing 293, 299, 300
Ford 147–8, 313
Forde, C.D. 501
forest-savannah 376, 378–80
forestry 371–2
formal economics 15–16, 21
formalist school 18–20, 21
formalist–substantivist debate 14, 18–20, 502–4
Foucalt, Michel 55
'fourth world' 37–8
France 42, 43, 151–3, 371, 428
franchising 276–7
Frank, A.G. 28, 30–32, 475
Franklin, Benjamin 345
Freeman, Carla 332–4
Friedman, Jonathan 222–3
Fukuyama, Francis 309
Fuller, C.J. 527
functional method 500–502, 504
Fur Society 356, 357
fur trade 84–5
Furnivall, J.S. 362
Fuyuge 374

gab 374
Gailey, Christine W. 198–9
Gardner, K. 480
gasto 408, 409, 410
Gell, Alfred 235–6
gender
  and development 332–4
  and division of labour 277, 326–7
  and 'domestic' 323, 324, 325, 328
  and 'economic' 323, 324
  and economic anthropology 232–5, 334–5
  and equality 319–20
  and gift exchange 247–8, 328–9
  and globalisation 323, 325, 332–5
  and households 325, 329–30, 504–5, 506–8
  and hunter-gatherer societies 326–7
  and inequality 326

and inheritance 330, 332
and labour force 333
and land 330–331, 332
and microeconomics 324
and power 328, 329
and private sphere 324–5
and property 330–331, 552–2
and public sphere 324–5
and reproduction 325, 327
and social change 323
and trade 508–9
gender-related development index 319–20
general-purpose money 16, 553–4
generalisation 3, 6–7
Germany 309
Geschiere P. 394
gift exchange
bridewealth 241, 246–7
and capitalism 257
classification 246–7
and colonisation 222
and commodity exchange 267–8
definition 290
evolution of 249
and gender 247–8, 328–9
inalienable possessions 233, 252–4, 255
and kinship 254
and obligations 231, 232, 249
and social relations 247, 252, 257, 267–8, 290, 374, 393, 394–5, 516, 549–550
and spirit of the gift 249, 250, 252–4
and trade 233–5, 399
and value 448
by women 328
see also ceremonial exchange; *dan*; *gimwali*; *hau*; *kula*; *moka;* reciprocity
gifts
and commodities 222, 235, 236–7, 242–3, 254–6
definition 230–231
and the economy 172
food 65, 66
to host 296–8, 300
and life-cycle 238–40
and morality 490, 492
and the person 256–9
women as object 164, 272, 328
see also dan; *gimwali*; *hau*; *kula*; potlatch
Gills, B.K. 31
gimwali 233
Gladwin, C.H. 67
Glave, Manuel 410
globalisation
alternatives to 51
and capitalism 48, 49–50, 56, 131–5
and ceremonial exchange 246, 351
and Christmas 350–351
economic history 54, 56
and ethnicity 367
and gender 324, 332–5
and information technology 36
and markets 275–80
and money 172, 173
and organised crime 37–8
and religion 37
and state 37
and trade concentration 275–9
and women 33–4
Gluckman, Max 112–13, 115, 121, 500
GNP (gross national product) 318
Godelier, Maurice 46, 53, 54–5, 233, 251
gold 167–8, 169, 212, 310
goods
commodification 14–15, 45, 47, 276, 450
meaning of 82, 215–18
and networks 33
and taste 215–16, 218, 220, 280–281
value 50, 212
women 164, 272, 328
see also commodities; gifts; prestige goods; subsistence goods
Goody, J. 114, 123, 327, 464, 501
Graedel, T.E. 356
Gramsci, Antonio 47–8
Gray, John 377–8
Greenberg, James B. 205–6
Geertz, C. 478
Gregory, C.A. 236–7, 252–3, 254, 267–8, 372
Guatemala 67
Gudeman, Stephen 207–8, 397–8, 405, 406, 407, 410–411, 418
Guinea 378–80

Gulliver, P.H. 501–2
Guro 52–3, 201
gypsies 549

Haaland, G. 356
haggling 267, 268, 269
Haldon, John 203–4
Hall, S. 360–361
Hall, T.D. 32–4
Halperin, Rhoda H. 19, 21
Hammoudi, A. 518
Hannerz, U. 136
Harding, Thomas G. 234
Harris, Mark 496
Harris, Marvin 213–14, 344–5, 494
Harris, Olivia 325, 408, 416
Harrison, E. 477, 484
Harrison, Lawrence 309
Harrison, S. 366
Harriss-White, B. 531, 533
Hart, K. 506, 508
Hartmann, Heidi 328
Harvey, David 181
hau 250, 252, 253, 254
Healey, Christopher J. 234–5
Heelas, Paul 350
Hefner, Robert W. 349
hegemony 47–8, 136, 138, 182
herding 356, 365–6
Herskovits, Melville J. 212–13, 502, 503
Hertz, Ellen 183, 184, 284, 554
Heyman, J. McC. 84
hierarchies 448–50, 504–5
high-tech centres 35–6
Hinduism 342–3, 346, 449, 530, 531, 532
Hindus 363
historicism 52–6
history, in political economy 41–2, 51–6
Ho, Karen Z. 185–6, 187
Holland 118
Hopkins, Nicholas 522
Hornberg, Alf 126–7, 131
households
  bargaining 62, 63
  and consumption 401, 405, 408
  decision-making 59–63
  domestic sector 406, 407, 410–411, 413–14, 452
  as economic unit 398–9, 405
  and firms 405
  gasto 408, 409, 410
  and gender 325, 329–30, 331–2, 504–5, 506–8
  income pooling 62, 63, 128–9, 143, 207, 329
  individual preferences 61–2
  and labour 59–60, 127–8, 165–6, 270–271, 329–30, 331–2
  and markets 405, 406, 407, 410–413, 414–15
  and money 165–6, 405, 407, 408, 411
  moral economy 401
  and need 128–9
  one-way economic transfers 292
  peasants 331–2, 398–9, 429
  and power 329, 331–2
  production 59–63, 127–8, 142, 329–30, 405, 501–2
  sharing 60, 292
  and social relations 405, 452
  'space in between' 405, 415–17, 419
  and uncertainty 64–6
  utility maximisation 60
  welfare 60
  and women 325, 504, 505
housewives 142–3, 325
housework 165, 271, 326, 451
Hugh-Jones, S. 270
human capital 465
human development indexes 319–20, 473
humans *see* persons
Humphrey, Caroline 269, 270, 548, 553, 554
Hungary 115–16, 121, 552
hunter-gather societies 114–15, 293, 326–7, 341–2, 495–6

ideas 448–50
identity, ethnic *see* community identity; ethnic identity
immigrants 357–8, 359, 360, 366
inalienable possessions 233, 252–4, 255, 366, 518
Inca society 202–3, 204
income
  and class warfare 130
  distribution 315, 317–18

households 62, 63, 128–9, 143, 207, 329
and provisioning 90
incorporation 33
India
agrarian structure 527–8
business management 530–533
capitalism 530–531
caste system 342–3, 357, 449, 526, 527–8, 530–533
equality 317
gift exchange 252, 256–7, 394–5
industrial work 143–4, 146, 149, 154, 155
jajmani system 526–7
manual work 142–3
mode of production 45
natural resources 530
religion 314, 341–2, 344, 530–533
indigenous people 364–6, 399, 481, 493, 496
individual preferences 60–62, 104, 217
individualism 206, 308, 309, 445, 450
individualist methodology 4–5, 19, 120
individualist models 138, 391–2
industrial leaders 530–533
industrial relations 132–3, 136–8, 316–17, 531
industrial revolution 31–2
industrial work
and agricultural labour 154–5
coercion 145–6
commitment 143–5
consent 143, 148–9
control 147–9
eligibility 143
ethnic divisions 149–51
and 'free' labour 146
'making out' 148–9
Marxist perspective 144, 145
regimes 147, 154–5
risks 151–3
and self-worth 155–6
and time 142, 147, 154
and women 142–3, 144–5, 150–151, 155–6
and work discipline 142, 147–8, 155
industrialisation 27, 33, 131–2, 141–3, 493, 541
inequality 318, 326, 528
informal economy 29, 405, 415–17, 419, 494, 508, 521, 522, 531, 533
information 33, 35, 170
see also knowledge
information-processing model 67–8
information technology 34–8, 177, 278, 279
Ingold, T. 375
Ingrassia, Catherine 181
inheritance 293–4, 330, 332, 501–2, 520
instant reciprocity 230
institutionalism 19, 87
intellectual property 119
interest 178
International Monetary Fund (IMF) 311–12, 314, 475
international trade 28, 29, 30, 31, 134–5, 406
Isherwood, B. 211, 215
Islam 37, 179, 180, 298–9, 399, 516–17, 518, 519–20
Islamic law 516, 517, 518, 519–20
Italy 313, 366–7
Ivory Coast 52–3, 201, 280–281, 504–5, 506, 507, 508

jajmani system 526–7
Japan
agriculture 539
economic crisis 311–12
economic growth 309, 538, 539, 541
environmental problems 538, 539
exchange 251
financial markets 188–90
industrialisation 541
keiretsu networks 36
migration 540–541
production 313
sharecropping 69
as stakeholder economy 314, 316
state 538
and supply–market–demand complex 279–80
urbanisation 540
values 309
Java 155
Johnson, Chalmers 538
Jola society 341
Jones, C.W. 61
Ju/'hoansi 197–8, 201

Judaism 179, 180
just price 442

Kahn, Joel 393, 399
Kapchan, Deborah 277
Kayapo 452
keiretsu networks 36
Kennedy, P. 31
Keynes, J.M. 168–9, 170, 180
kin-organised societies
  distribution 197, 199–200, 201
  division of labour 45, 198, 199, 200–201
  exchange 45
  and missionaries 200, 374
  modes of production 45–6, 126, 196–9, 200–201
  redistribution 195, 196, 496
  sharing 197, 198, 200
  spheres of exchange 271–2
  and states 199–201
kinship
  and corporations 309
  and firms 128
  and persons 103
  and reciprocity 18, 254
  and subsistence 17
  systems 197–9
Kluckhohn, Klyde 445–7
Knorr Cetina, Karin 184–5, 187
knowledge 90, 98–9, 481, 504–5
  see also information
Komter, A.E. 328
Kottak, C.P. 340–341
kula 5, 17, 18, 231, 233, 239–40, 246, 247, 248, 250, 252, 254, 267, 297–8, 344

labour
  and capitalism 125–6, 127, 205
  and caste 528–9
  cheap 134, 142–4
  and class 130, 528–9
  commodification 14–15, 47, 450
  contracts 68–70
  control of 132, 147
  costs 133–5, 442
  and culture 135–6
  and debt 492–3
  division in society 5, 45, 198, 199, 200–201, 202, 203, 277, 290–291, 326–7
  and drudgery 59–60, 127
  and ethnicity 357–9, 360, 361–2, 362–4, 365–7
  exchange of 408–9, 434, 495–6
  exploitation 29, 44, 196–7, 443, 493
  export 134
  'free' 146
  and gender 277, 326–7, 329–30
  hiring 70–74
  and households 59–60, 127–8, 163–4, 270–271
  impersonal nature 165–6
  in kin-organised societies 45, 198, 199, 200–201
  and need 59–60, 127–8
  peasants 409, 412, 414, 415, 425, 426, 429–31, 432–4, 435, 436 , 493
  in political economy 44
  and population 32
  productivity 127–8
  and profits 126–7
  recruitment 127
  and social relations 452, 495–6
  surpluses 196, 495–6
  in tributary states 202, 203
  unions 132–3, 136–8, 316, 317
  value 44, 47, 125–7, 131, 194, 394, 440, 442–3, 450–451
  and women 277, 326, 327, 333–4, 540
  see also farming; industrial relations; industrial work; pre-industrial work; unemployment
labour markets 70–74, 127, 132, 451
labour time 126–7, 131
Lake Titicaca 376–7, 380–382
land
  and base 100–101
  and conflict 236
  and gender 330–331, 332
  and inalienable possession 518
  ownership 45–6, 117, 332, 433
  and peasants 416, 424, 433
  and rational choice 117, 332
land revenue 526
land tenure 117, 332, 416, 433, 551
Landes, David 309–10
landlords 47, 68, 69–70, 203–4
landscape 373–5, 382

Lang, A. 484
language 359–60, 365, 368, 516
Lanigan, S. 462
Latin America 28, 313, 316, 393, 394
Lave, Jean 136, 137
law
  and access 380–382
  and gift exchange 233, 237–8
  immigration 366
  and property 111–14, 119, 121, 330–331, 517–20
  and provisioning 87
  Roman 442
Leach, Melissa 378–80
Leacock, Eleanor B. 196–7
Ledeneva, A.V. 267, 269–70
Lederman, Rena 240–241
Lee, Richard B. 197–8, 201
Lee Kuan Yew 308–9
legal anthropology 517–20
Lemon, A. 553
Lenin, V.I. 28, 426, 435
Lévi-Strauss, Claude 328, 498
Lewis, D. 480, 481
Lewis, O. 361
libertarianism 391–2
life-cycle exchanges 239–40, 542
life-cycle studies 466–7
Limbert, M. 518–19
Linares, Olga 341
lineage mode of production 52–3, 505
loans 65
Locke, John 370, 371
London Recycling Day 457–60
Long, N. 476, 484
Loomis, T. 481–2
loyalty 316

Maasai 200
MacCormack, G. 251
machine production 142
MacLennan, C. 461, 462–3
Maine, Henry 111–12
Malaysia 149–51, 317, 327, 330–331, 341–2, 361
Malinowski, Bronislaw 2–3, 5, 16–18, 112, 195, 231, 233, 238, 248, 250, 267, 297–8, 472
Mamdani, M. 477
Maori 250, 252, 253, 256–7, 481–2
maps 376, 377, 378, 379, 380–382
Marcus, G. 479
Maring 234–5
market capitalism 14–15, 502
market economies 16, 282–3, 502
market fundamentalism 129–30
market model 282–5, 324
market principle 275, 282, 290, 553
marketplaces 275–9
markets
  and commodity chains 279–82
  and communities 96–7
  and culture 280–282, 284
  definition 95–6
  in economic anthropology 4, 275, 285
  freedom of 97
  and globalisation 275–80
  and households 405, 406, 407, 410–413, 414–15
  impersonal nature 166, 405
  and individual choice 391–2
  and information technology 177, 278, 279
  and Islamic economics 399
  and knowledge 98–9
  liberalisation 177, 283, 391–2
  and materialism 399
  and money 169–70, 173, 451
  and morality 443
  neoclassical perspectives 94, 443
  and peasants 406, 410–413, 420, 424, 425, 434
  plurality 406
  and provisioning 78, 79, 80–81
  and rationality 443
  regulation 96, 102, 283
  rural 406
  and socialism 554
  and states 129
  supply–market–demand complex 279–82, 285
  and trade 275–9, 285, 508
  types 275, 406
  vertical integration 277–80, 285
marriage 164, 270–271, 502
Marshall, Alfred 164
Martel, C. Fonseca *see* Fonseca Martel, C.

Marx, Karl 125, 126, 129, 167, 168, 181, 194, 195–6, 306, 393, 425–6, 442–3, 450–451, 453, 495, 505
Marxism
  and anthropology 6
  and capitalism 324
  and economic history 52, 54
  and exploitation 27–8, 493
  and finance 181
  and hierarchies 504–5
  and industrial work 144, 145, 493
  in political economy 42, 493, 495–6
  and substantivist school 21
  and women 325, 504, 505
  see also structural Marxism; world-system theory
mass consumption 218, 223
mass production 148
material accumulations 101
materialism 399
Maurer, Bill 188
Mauritius 356–7, 360, 362–4
Mauss, Marcel 112, 160, 172, 211–12, 231, 232, 233, 237–8, 248–9, 252, 253, 258, 259, 394
maximisation
  and formalism 19
  and rationality 343
  self-interest 94–5, 104, 392, 401
  utility 60, 66–7, 70, 74
  and values 444
  welfare 94–5
Mayer, Enrique 410, 415–16
McCracken, Grant 216–17
meanings
  and actions 450–452, 453
  and culture 136
  of goods 82
  hierarchical nature 448–50
  and provisioning 82, 85, 88, 91
measurement 371–4, 376–7, 378–80, 459, 460–467, 468
Meillassoux, Claude 6, 52–4, 327, 504–5, 506, 507
Melanesia
  barter 269
  ceremonial exchange 253–4, 255, 257
  'dividuals' 103, 120
  'partible person' 329
  structural Marxism 42
  value systems 448
  see also kula; Trobriand Islands
men 142, 293, 325, 328, 334
Mendi 240–242, 243
Mentore, George 495–6
Methodism 200
Mexico 62, 205–7, 278
microeconomic models 63–4, 67–8, 324, 343, 455, 456–7
Middle East 517
migration 500, 539–41
Miller, Daniel 217–19, 223, 400–401, 455
miners 65–6, 145, 358, 393, 394, 493
minor goods 163, 164, 272
Mintz, Sidney 46, 85–6, 131, 146, 220, 431
missionaries 200, 210, 348, 374
Mitchell, D. 87
Mitchell, Timothy 523
Miyazuki, Hirokazu 188–9
modernisation theory 26, 308, 474–5, 478
modes of production
  'articulation' 42, 53
  capitalism 48–51, 126, 204–8
  concept of 41, 43, 505
  forces of production 43, 44, 48
  in kin-organised societies 45–6, 126, 196–9, 200–201
  means of production 44, 45, 46–7, 48, 126, 205
  relations of production 44
  tributary 53, 126, 201–4, 554
  Western economies 46–7
  and world-system theory 53
moka 236, 238, 240, 241–2, 243
money
  and anthropologists' discussions of 160, 163
  and barter 161–3, 264–5, 266, 272
  and capitalism167
  in ceremonial exchange 253
  and class 165
  and communities 170–171, 172–3
  and economies 311–15
  and ethics 393–5
  euro 172–4
  and fetishism 451
  and gift exchange 236

and globalisation 172, 173
gold 167–8, 169
and households 165–6, 405, 407
as idea 168–9, 172–3
impersonal nature 160, 165–6, 167–8, 169–70, 394
individuated 164, 180
and information 170
in market economies 16
and markets 169–70, 173, 451
meaning of 170–171
and morality 461, 497
as object 168–9, 172–3
of people 171–2
and peasants 408, 409, 410, 411, 428
in postsocialist societies 553–4
in pre-capitalist economies 14
and religion 180, 552
scarcity 266
social purpose 164, 180
and social relations 394
and states 169–70, 171–2, 173
and taxation 267
and traditional cultures 163–5
value 48–9, 50, 168, 450–451, 452
women 408, 409
moneystuffs 16, 17–18
Moore, H. 323
moral economies 395–9, 401, 490, 492, 527, 529, 552
morality 309, 392, 393, 394–5, 441, 442, 443, 461, 497
Morocco 277, 449–50, 518
Morris, M.D. 143–4
Mount Hagen 234–5, 236–7, 240, 242, 243
multicentric economies 16
multinational corporations 134
Mundy, Martha 519–20
Munif, Abdelrahman 519
Munn, Nancy 450
Murphy, A.D. 62
Murray, C. 60

Nader, Laura 517–18
Nash, J. 145, 493, 495
nationalism 30
natural environment 372–3
natural resources 529–30
naturalism 2–3
Neale, Walter 526
Near East
development 521–2
economic anthropology 515–23
gender 520, 521
geography 516
gift exchange 516
informal economies 521, 522
Islam 516–17, 518, 519–20
law 516, 517–18, 519–20
peasants 522
power 523
property 517–20, 523
segmentation 521
see also Africa; individual countries
negative externalities 456
negative reciprocity 492–3
neoclassical models 70–72, 94, 440
Nepal 269
networks 33, 36, 82–3, 95, 167, 360, 363–4
see also social networks
New Age 350
New Guinea 65, 234, 235–7, 339
see also Papua New Guinea
New Household Economic model 60
new technology 35, 64, 120, 122–3
New Zealand 250, 481–2
Nigeria 163–4, 165, 271–2, 501, 507
non-governmental organisations (NGOs) 83, 473, 477, 479, 482, 484, 522, 523, 550
non-Western cultures
'capitalisms' 349
gift exchange 257, 259
households 59, 60, 61–2, 452
rationality 343–5, 443
norms 122, 307, 415–16
North 472, 475
Norway 100, 318, 319, 320, 356, 360, 364–6
Nozick, Robert 391–2
nuclear industry 151–3
Nuer 102, 247, 445
numbers 187–8, 371

objectivity 371, 372, 379, 461
obligations 65–6, 212, 230, 231, 239, 249, 252, 408–9, 490, 492, 502
obligatory reciprocity 232

occult economies 48, 181
old persons 292, 293
Oman 518–19
one-way economic transfers
  and bribery 298
  charity 298–9
  dimensions 299–300
  endowments 294–5
  forager food-sharing 293, 299, 300
  gift to host 296–8, 300
  hospitality 299
  household pooling 292
  inheritance 293–4
  and production 291–2
  sacrifice 299
  theft 295–6
Ong, A. 149–51, 155
opportunity costs 263–4, 265, 462
organisations 83, 307, 473, 477, 479, 482, 484, 522, 523, 550
organised crime 37–8
Orlove, B. 380–382
Ortiz, Sutti 72–4
Osteen, Mark 258, 328
Ostrom, Elinor 529–30
ownership 111–12, 117–18, 120, 121, 122, 548, 551

Pacific societies 232–3, 242–3, 252
  see also Melanesia; Polynesia; Trobriand Islands
Pakistan 355–6
Panama 99, 103–4
Papua New Guinea 2–3, 5, 16–18, 112, 231, 234–5, 236–7, 240–243, 374
Park, Robert E. 357–8
Parry, Jonathan 5, 149, 154, 155, 164, 180, 252, 255, 256–7, 272, 394–5
Parsons, Talcott 308
participant observation 3, 340, 481
'partible person' 329
pathogens 31, 33, 38
Pearce, D. 462
peasants
  anthropological perspectives 423–5, 436
  arbitrage 416–18
  autonomy 434, 436
  barter 408, 415–17, 431–2
  and capitalist farming 424–5, 426, 429, 430, 436
  and caste 528–9
  and class 426, 427, 528–9
  and colonisation 430, 431
  consumption 410–411, 413–14, 425
  credit 408, 410, 431–2, 493
  debt 424, 428, 431–2
  and evolutionism 426–7
  exchanges 408–9, 415
  and feudalism 425–6
  food 410–411, 413–14, 420, 428, 432
  funds 409, 427–8
  gasto 408, 409, 410
  heterogeneity 426, 427, 428
  households 331–2, 398–9, 429
  labour 59–60, 127–8, 154–5, 409, 412, 414, 415, 425, 426, 429–31, 432–4, 435, 436, 493
  and land 416, 424, 433, 528
  and local village 427, 436
  and markets 406, 410–413, 414–15, 420, 424, 425, 434
  mobility 433–4, 435
  money 178, 348–9, 408, 409, 410, 428
  moral economies 395–9
  multiple activities 433, 425, 426, 433–4, 435
  nostalgic image 425
  obligations 408–9
  petty commodity production 426, 432, 434, 435, 436
  as 'primitive isolates' 423
  production 408, 424, 426, 429, 430, 432, 435, 436
  provisioning 427–8
  and redistribution 406
  rents 425, 428
  and risk 64
  and seasons 409–10
  services 408–9, 419
  spheres 408–9
  subsistence 410, 425, 432, 435, 436, 496
  surplus 410, 428–9
  and wider society 423–4, 427, 436
peripheral states 28, 29, 30
persons
  anthropological perspective 95
  and base 102–4

and communities 102–4
constructs of 103
and cost–benefit analysis (CBA) 462–3
'dividuals' 103, 120
and gift exchange 256–9
and kinship 103
'partible' 329
in spheres of exchange 163–4
values 306
Peru 376–7, 380–382, 476
Peters, E.L. 521
places 375–8, 381, 382
plantation societies 85–6, 131–2, 146, 348–9, 357, 359, 362–4, 393, 394, 502
Platteau, J.-P. 531–2
pluralism 362–4, 405
Poland 115, 116
Polanyi, Karl
career 14, 22
death 20, 21
and distribution 194–5
embeddedness 340–341, 392
and exchange 194–5, 231–2
and formalist–substantivist debate 14, 18–20
goals 22
The great transformation 14–15, 502
influence of Malinowski 16–18
influence today 22–3
major concepts 15–16, 18, 22, 324
and market economy 283, 502–3
and Marxism 21
and pre-capitalist economies 340
theories on market capitalism 14–15, 502
Trade and market in the early empires 21, 503
Polanyi school 15–16, 18–23
policy making 455, 461
see also development; environmental policy
Polier, N. 65–6
political economy
concepts 41–2
and cultural studies 47–8
definition 41, 130–131, 494–5
and ecological anthropology 44
and economic anthropology 55–6
and fetishism 48
and history 41–2, 51–6
and information technology 34–8
and Marxism 42, 493, 495–6
modernisation theory 26
and provisioning 84–6
relationship with anthropology 26–7
and structure 54
and surplus value 50–51
and technology 44
see also capitalism; mode of production; structural Marxism
political/military networks (PMNs) 33
pollution 87, 461, 462, 538, 539, 543
Polynesia 231, 253
poor countries 28, 29, 311, 315
population 31, 32, 33, 38
post-development theory 475–6, 478
post-modernism 479–80
postsocialism 547
postsocialist societies
and consumption 554–5
and development organisations 550
farming 548, 551, 552
gender 552–3
gypsies 549
money 553–4
privatisation 548, 550–551, 552–3
property 550–552
social networks 549–50
transition 547–8, 549, 555–6
potlatch 210, 211–12, 232, 251, 344, 400
poverty 361, 368, 475, 549
power
and agrarian structure 528
and consumption 220, 401–2
and culture 136
and development 477–8, 480
and exchange 291
and gender 328, 329
and labour unions 137–8
and measurement 372
and property 523
and provisioning 85, 87–8
practice theory 136
practices 2, 5
pre-capitalist economies 14, 15–16, 18
pre-industrial work 142, 144
prestations 232, 240

prestige 17–18, 233, 239, 242, 251, 291
prestige economy 212–13
prestige goods 163, 164, 272
price
  as exchange value 49, 269–70
  and opportunity cost 263–4
  and profit 50
  and transaction cost 264–5
  and value 440–441, 442, 443
price-setting markets 16
private property
  and capitalism 110–111, 112, 126, 527
  and legal rights 110–111, 116
  and rational choice 117
  social significance 111
  and socialism 115–16, 120–121, 548
private spheres 324–5
privatisation 117, 122, 123, 124, 523, 548, 550–551, 552–3
privileges 356
production
  and capitalism 127, 129
  and children 142
  and class 44, 46, 505
  and consumption 217–19, 396–7, 398–9
  in communities 95
  costs 442
  and distribution 194
  for exchange 492
  and households 59–63, 127–8, 142, 329–30, 405, 501–2
  men 142
  and one-way economic transfers 291–2
  organisation 313
  by peasants 408, 424, 426, 429, 430, 432, 435, 436
  and religion 341–2
  rural 331–2
  and social relations 518
  supply and demand 194
  for use 492
  value of 49, 492
  and wives 61–2
  and women 61–2, 72, 142
  see also modes of production
productivity 127–8, 132, 147, 393
profits
  accumulation 126–7
  and capitalism 126, 194
  and commodity exchange 267
  firms 128, 129, 307, 313–14
  and labour 126–7
  and price 50
  and productivity 132
  and trade 396, 397, 399
  and values 315
progress 195, 308, 474
property
  appropriation of nature 370–371
  as a base 105
  and biomedical technologies 120
  as collateral 180
  communal ownership 117–18, 120, 121
  disputes 517–18, 523
  evolutionary perspective 114, 123
  and gender 330–331, 552–3
  and hunter-gather societies 114
  and indigenous people 119
  and inheritance 293–4, 501–2
  legal perspectives 111–14, 119, 121, 330–331, 517–20
  and new technologies 120, 122–3
  and persons 120, 122
  and postsocialist societies 550–551
  and power 523
  and rational choice 117
  rights 111–13, 116, 119, 121, 122, 518
  and social organisation layer model 113–14, 115, 116, 121–2, 123, 124
  and social structure 112–13
  and socialist societies 115–16, 120–121
  and sustainable development 117–18, 121
  as a term 110–111
  and values 122
  and women 114, 121, 327, 330–331, 520, 552–3
  see also land; land tenure; private property; privatisation; water
Protestantism 310, 345–7, 530
provisioning
  and childcare 79, 81

complexity 78, 91
and consumption 78
crises 89–90
decision-making 79, 80, 81
and distribution 88–90
food 78, 79–81, 89–90
and income 90
and institutions 83, 87, 91
and markets 78, 79, 80–81
and meaning 82, 85, 88, 91, 215
modes 82
non-market 79, 83
networks 82–3
paths 78, 81–90, 91
peasants 427–8
political economy perspective 84–6
and politics 86
and power 85, 87–8
and production 79
and self-sufficiency 396–7
sharing 79, 81
and social relations 79, 81, 82–3, 85, 89, 91
state 79, 81–2, 87, 89
transactional and cultural perspective 86
public spheres 324–5
Puerto Rico 278
purchase 290
Putnam, H. 371
Putnam, R. 465

qualitative perspective 371, 372, 373, 376–7, 378–80
quantitative perspective 371–2, 373, 374, 376–7, 378–80, 459, 468
see also cost–benefit analysis; life-cycle studies; triple bottom line (3BL) assessments
Quichua 221

race 361
see also ethnicity
Radcliffe-Brown, Arthur R. 6–7, 445
radical development theory 479
Rappaport, Roy A. 213, 214, 234
rational choice 63–4, 94–5, 104, 117, 343, 395, 445
rationality 343–5, 347, 348, 392, 443
Rawls, John 392

reciprocity
concept of 16, 250–251
delayed 230–231
generalised 492
and kinship 18, 195, 206, 254
and markets 185
and non-market economies 502
negative 492–3
and social relations 104, 405, 490
and spirit of the gift 252–4
and substantivism 22
recycling 457–60
Redfield, Robert 423
redistribution
in capitalist societies 206, 207–8
and *jajmani* system 526–7
in kin-organised societies 195, 496
in non-market economies 502–3
and peasants 16, 18, 406
and substantivism 22
regulation 89, 90, 91, 96, 102, 181–2
reincarnation 295
relations of production 44
religion
anthropological perspective 340
and capitalism 310, 345–50, 530–531
and charity 298
and consumerism 350–351
and cultural differences 345–50
and development 183
and endowments 295
and financial systems 179
and globalisation 37
in hunter-gatherer societies 341–2
missionaries 200, 210, 348, 374
and money 180, 552
and rationality 343–5, 347, 348
and sacrifice 214, 299
and values 346–7
and wealth 339, 346–7
see also ceremonial exchange; individual religions
rents 45, 200, 203–4, 425, 428
reproduction 325, 327
revolutions, economic 307
Rey, P.-P. 505, 506
Riccio, B. 366–7
rice farming 61–2
rich countries 28, 29, 311, 315
Richards, A.I. 500

rights 111–13, 116, 121, 122, 518
Riles, Annelise 188, 189–90
Rimrock, New Mexico 445–7
risk 64–6, 68–70, 73, 151–3, 264–5
  see also uncertainty
ritual destruction 210, 212, 400
Rivera, Alberto 397–8, 406, 410–411, 418
Robertson, A.F. 477
Robinson, Joan 180
Rofel, L. 144–5
Rogers, B. 476–7
Roldán, M. 62
Roman law 442
romanticists 19–20
Rostow, Walt W. 27, 308, 474–5
Rudner, David 531
rules 96, 100, 102, 520
ruling class 46
rural markets 406
rural production 331–2
  see also peasants
Russia 115, 266–7, 269–70, 426, 548, 553
  see also Soviet Union

Saberwal, Satish 532
sacra 102
sacrifices 214, 299
'safety-first strategy' 65–6
Sahlins, Marshall 60, 250, 254, 267, 269, 280, 345, 399, 492, 501
salaries 316
  see also income; wages
Sami 364–6
Scandinavia 315, 317–18, 319, 320, 360, 364–6
  see also Norway; Sweden
scarcity 121, 205–6, 266, 268, 269–70, 395, 444
Schneider, H.K. 503, 504
Shönhuth, M. 483
science 371
scientific forestry 371–2
scientific management 147–8, 155
Scotland 376, 377–8
Scott, J. 371–2, 374, 395, 396, 527, 529
Scott, R. 501
Scottish Borders 376, 377–8
security 97, 104
segmentation 521
Selby, H.A. 62
self-interest 94–5, 104, 391, 392, 401
self-sufficiency 396–7
self-worth 155–6
semi-peripheral states 29, 30, 33, 36
Sen, Amartya 319
Senegalese Wolof 366–7
serfs 47
Service, Elman 20, 195
services 50, 101, 311, 313, 408–9, 418
Shannon, T.R. 27, 28
sharecropping 68–70
shareholder economies 314–15, 316
sharing
  food 60, 103, 293
  in households 60, 292
  in kin-organised societies 65, 103, 197, 198, 200
  meanings 170–171
  money 170–171
  and ownership 114–15
  and reciprocity 81
sheep farming 376, 377–8
Sierra Leone 356
Sillitoe, P. 484
Simmel, Georg 167–8, 170
Singer, Milton 530–531
Singerman, Diane 521
skills 98–9
slavery 46, 146
Smith, Adam 161, 168, 194, 391, 441, 442, 495
Smith, T.C. 154
social action 465
social change 323–4, 500–501
social class *see* class
social laws 3
social life 4–5
social mobility 360, 361, 362, 502
social networks 182, 183, 359, 549–50, 555
social psychology 3
social relations
  and barter 268, 269–70
  and consumption 83–4
  and economies 340–341, 372–3, 391, 392
  and exchange 405, 490, 492, 495–6

and gift exchange 247, 252, 257, 267–8, 290, 374, 393, 394–5, 516, 549–50
and households 405, 452
and labour 452, 495–6
and money 394
and property 518
in provisioning 79, 81, 83–4, 85, 89, 91
and reciprocity 405, 490
social structure 112–13
social theory 444–5
social value 50
socialism 48, 51, 120, 144–5, 547–8, 554
socialist societies 115–16, 120–121, 547–8, 554
society 307, 324–5, 445, 463–6
sociocultural anthropology 21
sociology 3, 5
Sombart, Werner 310
South 472, 475
South Africa 500
South America
change 496–7
culture 491–4, 496
economic anthropology 490–498
indigenous societies 496
money 178
political economy 491, 493, 494–6
production systems 491, 492
reciprocity 491, 492–3
structuralism 498
subsistence 496
see also individual countries
South Asia
agrarian structure 527–8
business management 530–531
capitalism 530–531
caste system 526, 527–9, 530–533
economic anthropology 526–33
jajmani system 526–7
natural resources 529–30
religion 530–533
see also East Asia; individual countries; Southeast Asia
South Sea Bubble scandal 181
Southeast Asia 142–3, 311
see also East Asia; individual countries; South Asia
Soviet Union 37, 52, 54
see also Russia
'space in between' 405, 415–17, 419
spatial location, of goods 87
special-purpose money 16
spheres of exchange 163–4, 165, 243, 255, 270–272, 405–6, 501, 504
spirits 150–151, 167, 249, 250, 252–4, 339, 341–2
Spiro, M. 295
St Augustine 441–2
Stack, Carol 82
stakeholder economies 314, 315–16
state money 236–7
states
appropriation 202, 203–4
and capitalism 126, 129, 133
economic policies 132
and globalisation 37
governance 538
and kin-organised societies 199–201
and markets 129
and money 169–70, 172, 173
and provisioning 79, 81–2, 87, 89
solvency 307
theories of 133
trade policies 134
in world-system theory 30
status 142–3, 212
Steiner, Christopher B. 280–281
Stewart, Michael 549
Stiglitz, J. 129, 132
Stivens, Maila 327, 330–331, 333
stock markets 183–5, 186–7, 188–9, 284, 554
Strathern, Marilyn 103, 120, 255, 328–9, 339, 448
strawberry production 68–70
structural functionalism 6, 445
structural linguistics 439
structural Marxism 42, 43, 52–4
structuralism 447–50, 498
structure, in history 53–4
sub-Saharan Africa
formalist–substantivist debate 502–4
functional method 500–502, 504
gender 504–5, 506–8
households 501–2, 504–5, 506–8
Marxism 504–6
migration 500

production 505
social change 500–501
trade 503, 508–9
subsistence
and kinship 17, 18, 311
and moral economies 395–9
peasants 410, 425, 432, 435, 436, 496
poor countries 311
subsistence goods 163, 164, 272
substantive economy 132
substantivist school 14, 15–16, 18–20, 21, 22, 231–2, 324, 526–7, 553
Sudan 356, 476, 504
sugar 85–6, 131–2, 146, 220, 348–9, 463
supernatural 145, 150–151, 167, 178, 181, 299
see also devil; occult economies; spirits; witchcraft
supply and demand 194
supply–market–demand complex 279–82, 285
surplus 45, 47, 48, 132, 194, 196, 203–4, 410, 428–9, 495–6
surplus value 50–51
sustainable development 117–18, 456, 463, 472, 481–2
Sweden 98, 99–100, 318, 319, 320
symbiotic relationships 6, 30
symbolic ecology 491, 493–4
synchronic structures 53
systematic methodology 5–6

taste 215–16, 218, 220, 280–281
Taussig, Michael 145, 178, 348–9, 393, 394, 493, 497
Tax, S. 482
taxation
and euro 173
in kin-organised societies 200, 203
and monetary transactions 267
revolts 171–2
and state power 169, 203–4, 307
and surpluses 45, 203–4, 307, 317–18, 319
and welfare state 315, 317–18, 319
Taylor, F.W. 147–8, 155
technology 29, 31, 32, 44, 129, 131, 186–7
Terray, Emmanuel 53, 201, 506
Thailand 134–5
theft 295–6, 492
Thelen, Tatjana 121, 552
Third-World
development 21, 55
finance 182–3
and labour costs 134
terminology 472, 478
traditionalism 27
values 309
Thomas, N. 222
Thompson, E.P. 142, 155
time
and environmental policy 456, 458, 462
farming 154
and industrial work 142, 147, 154
and political economy 54
Tiv 163–4, 165, 271–2, 501
Tonga 198–200
total prestations 232, 233, 249
trade
and barter 233
ethics 396, 397, 398–9
and gender 508–9
and gift exchange 233–5, 399
and markets 95–6, 508
non-market economies 503
policies 134
and profit 396, 397, 399
and world-system theory 28, 29, 30, 31
trade concentration 275–9, 285
transaction costs 264–5, 266, 268, 458, 459
transition 548, 555–6
tribal societies *see* kin-organised societies
tributary states 201–4
tribute 53, 126, 399, 554
Trinidad 218–19
triple bottom line (3BL) assessments 463–6
Trobriand Islands 5, 16–18, 112, 231, 233, 237, 238–40, 246, 247–8, 267, 297–8, 328
Truman, Harry S 473
trust 531–3
Tsing, Anna 181
Tsukiji Market 279–80
Tully, J. 370–371

tuna industry 134–5, 279–80
Turkey 463
Turner, T. 452

uncertainty 64–6, 97, 462
  see also risk
underdevelopment 28, 473, 475
unemployment 142, 143
unicentric economies 16
unions 132–3, 136–8, 316, 317
United Kingdom *see* Britain
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 318–20, 473
United States
  banking 311–12
  competition 316, 317
  corporation 313, 316
  domestic networks 82
  equality 317
  ethnicity 357–8, 361
  finance 186, 188–9
  fishing industry 128
  formalist–substantivist debate 14, 18–20, 502–4
  gift exchange 257, 258–9, 351
  gift to host 296–7
  GNP (gross national product) 318
  high-tech centres 35–6
  income 130
  industrial relations 316–17
  industrial revolution 31
  industrial work 147–8
  labour costs 133–4
  labour unions 136–8
  markets 284
  New Age religion 350
  pollution 461
  production 313
  sharecropping 68–70
  as shareholder economy 314–15, 316
  taxation 315
  values 309, 445–7
  welfare state 315
  well-being 319, 320
  world domination 314
United States Agency for International Development (USAID) 473, 550
universalism 3, 308
urbanisation 539–41
use value 49, 393, 396, 441–2, 492
utility maximisation 60, 66–7, 70, 74

value
  and actions 306, 450–452, 453, 465
  anthropological perspective 439, 340, 444–7
  and consumption 51
  cost–benefit analysis (CBA) 460–463
  economic perspective 439, 440–443
  of environment 373–4, 376, 378–80, 82
  and exchange 49, 50, 393, 396, 448, 492
  of goods 50, 212, 393
  incommensurable 451–2
  and individualism 450
  of labour 44, 47, 125–7, 131, 194, 394, 440, 442–3, 450–451
  life-cycle studies 466–7
  measurement 460–468
  of money 48–9, 50, 450–451, 452
  and morality 443
  and price 440–441, 442, 443
  of production 49
  realisation 49–50
  structuralist models 447–50
  surplus 50–51
  terminology 439–40
  tokens 451–2
  triple bottom line (3BL) assessments 463–6
  use 49, 393, 396, 441–2, 492
values
  Asian 308–9
  and capitalism 310–311, 315
  comparative studies 445–7
  competition 316, 317
  definition 446
  economies 306–8, 315–20
  equality 317, 318
  income distribution 317–18
  loyalty 317
  maximisation 444
  and morals 309
  'one best' orientation 308–18
  personal 306
  profits 315
  and property 122
  and prosperity 318–20
  and religion 346–7

salaries 316
of shareholder economies 315–16
of stakeholder economies 316
terminology 439–40, 444
trust 309
Third-World 309
Western societies 308–10
Vaughan, Megan 331–2
Veblen, Thorstein 213, 215–16, 310
Vélez-Ibáñez, Carlos 206–7
Verdery, Katherine 547–8, 551, 553–4, 555–6
vertical market integration 277–80, 285
Vialles, N. 153
von Benda-Beckmann, Franz 113–14, 115, 116, 121–2, 123, 124
von Benda-Beckmann, Keebet 113–14, 115, 116, 121–2, 123, 124

Wade, Robert 530
wages
and capitalism 126, 194
and exploitation 442–3
and fetishism 451
impersonal nature 165–6
and labour markets 70–72, 451
and world-system theory 29, 32
see also income; salaries
Wallerstein, I. 28–30
warfare *see* conflict
waste 210, 212, 400, 456, 457–60, 509
water 518–19, 523, 530
wealth 318, 320, 339, 345, 346–7, 400, 440
Weber, Max 166, 306–7, 309–10, 345–8, 465, 530–531
Weiner, Annette B. 232–3, 237, 238–40, 247–8, 253–4, 255, 258, 328, 518
Weismantel, Mary 219, 220–221, 419
welfare 60, 94–5
welfare state 35–6, 315, 317–18, 319
well-being 319, 320, 391
Wells, M. 68–70
Wenger, E. 136, 137
Western economic theory 440–443
Western economies 21, 27, 46–7, 54–5
Western Europe 311, 313, 314, 315, 316, 318, 319, 320, 366, 370–371
Western societies 164–5, 257, 258–9, 308–10, 343
Whitehead, Ann 329–30
Wiber, Melanie 118, 119
Wilk, R. 220, 221–2, 324, 343, 344, 372–3
willingness to pay (WTP) 462
Wilson, G. 476
Wiser, W. H. 526–7
witchcraft 234
wives 61–2, 294, 325, 505
Wolf, D. 155
Wolf, Eric R. 53, 84–5, 126, 130–131, 135–6, 138, 410, 427–8, 479
women
and altruism 328
and ceremonial exchange 238–40, 247–8
and division of labour 277, 326, 327
as gift-givers 328
as gift object 164, 272, 328
and globalisation 333–4
in households 325, 504, 505
industrial work 142–3, 144–5, 150–151, 155–6
and informal economy 521
labour 277, 326, 327, 333–4, 540
and Marxism 325, 504, 505
and one-way economic transfers 292, 293
peasants 408, 409
and production 61–2, 72
and property 114, 121, 327, 330–331, 520, 552–3
role 151
subordination 325
see also daughters; wives
Woodburn, J. 114–15
work 325
see also housework; industrial work; labour; pre-industrial work
workers 44, 47
working-classes 130, 131, 137–8, 144
World Bank 180, 181, 182, 311–12, 314, 319, 473, 475, 477, 479, 523
world-system theory
antecedents 27–8
and evolution 33–4
and incorporation 33
and international trade 28, 29, 30, 31
main features 28–30

and modernisation theory 26–7
and modes of production 53
networks 33
origins 30–32
significance 38–9
world-system concept 32–3
world system origins 30–32
world-system typology 33–4
World Trade Organization (WTO) 475
Yaitepec, Oaxaca 205–6
Yang, M. 399, 400
Yemen 519–20
Yngstrom, I. 330, 331–2

Zaloom, Caitlin 186–7
Zambia 358, 476, 500
Zelizer, V. 460–461
Zonabend, F. 151–3
Zweig, M. 130